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HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

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THE
HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

FROM THE

ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER III. TO THE UNION.

BY

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F.R.S.E. & F.A.S.

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HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

CHAPTER I.

MARY.

1542—1546.

THE total rout of the Scottish army at the Solway Moss, and the death of James the Fifth within a fortnight after that event, produced the most important changes in the policy of both kingdoms. To Henry the Eighth, and that powerful faction of the Douglases, which, even in banishment, had continued to exert, by its secret friends, a decided influence in Scottish affairs, the death of the king was a subject of fervent congratulation. The English monarch immediately embraced, with the enthusiasm belonging to his character, the design of marrying his son, the Prince of Wales, to the infant Mary, hoping by this means to unite the two kingdoms, which had so long been the enemies of each other, into one powerful monarchy in the persons of their descendants. The Earl of Angus and the Douglases, after a banishment of fifteen years, joyfully contemplated the prospect of a return to their native country; they had become subjects of the English monarch, had largely shared his bounty and protection; and Henry determined to put their gratitude to the test by claiming their assistance in forwarding his great scheme of procuring the Princess Mary for his son, and incor-

porating the kingdom of Scotland into the English monarchy; but, in the prosecution of this design, the king employed other agents. On their first arrival in London the Scottish prisoners, who were taken at the Solway Moss, found themselves treated with great severity; they were paraded through the streets of the metropolis, conducted to the Tower, and watched with much jealousy; but, as soon as the intelligence arrived of the death of their master the king, an immediate and favourable change in their condition took place. Their high rank and influence in Scotland convinced Henry that they might be useful, and even necessary agents to him in the accomplishment of his designs, the rigour of their confinement was accordingly relaxed; and they now experienced not only kindness, but were entertained with hopes of a speedy return to their country, on condition that they forwarded the designs of the English king. Sir George Douglas, the brother of Angus, who had shared his long banishment, and was much in the confidence of Henry, appears to have been intrusted with the principal share in negotiating the marriage. His talents for the man-

agement of political affairs were superior to those of his brother the earl, over whose mind he possessed great influence; and if we may believe the expressions which he employed in his correspondence with Henry, he appears to have forgotten his allegiance to his natural prince in the humility of his homage, and the warmth of his devotion to the English monarch.¹

The project of a marriage between young Edward and the Scottish queen was in itself so plausible, and, if concluded upon an equitable basis and with a just attention to the mutual rights and independence of each country, appeared so likely to be attended with the happiest results, that it required little argument to recommend it to the Scottish prisoners, even had they not seen in it the only road by which they were to escape from their captivity; but whilst all can understand their readiness to promote a matrimonial alliance, and a perpetual union between the two kingdoms, had Henry confined his views to such a general design, the conduct pursued by that monarch, and the conditions which he offered, were such as no man of independent and patriotic feelings could, without ignominy, have embraced. He insisted that they should acknowledge him as lord superior of the kingdom of Scotland; that the prisoners should exert their influence to procure for him the government of the kingdom, and the immediate resignation of all its fortresses into his hands; that they should use their utmost efforts to have the infant queen delivered into his power, to be kept in England,² and, in the event of such demands being refused by the parliament of Scotland, he stipulated that their whole feudal strength was to be employed in co-operating with his army, and completing the conquest of

the country. Nor did the English monarch content himself with the bare promise of his prisoners to fulfil his wishes: the affair was transacted with much rigour and solemnity. A bond or obligation was drawn up, which engrossed these stipulations. To this they were required to subscribe their names, and confirm it by their oath; they were to leave their eldest sons, or nearest relatives, in their place as pledges for their fidelity; should they fail in accomplishing the wishes of the king, they were to return to their prisons in England, on his so requiring it; or, if he judged it more profitable for the accomplishment of his design, they were to remain in Scotland and assist him in the war.³ The bond, in short, contained terms which virtually annihilated the existence of Scotland as a separate kingdom; and sad as is the fate of the captive, I am not prepared to admit that the Scottish prisoners were placed in a situation which called for hesitation. They were called upon to choose whether they were to preserve unsullied their individual honour, and maintain their national independence, by remaining in prison, and braving a captivity which the cruelty of Henry might render perpetual; or whether they were to return dishonoured to their country, bound by the most solemn obligation to employ their strength in reducing it to the condition of a province of England. Under such circumstances the citizen of a free country ought to have felt that he had only one resolution to adopt; and it is with sorrow it must be declared, this resolution was not the one embraced by the Scottish nobles. Unable to endure the thoughts of remaining in England, the Earls of Glencairn and Cassillis, with the Lords Maxwell, Somerville, and Oliphant, agreed to the conditions upon which Henry permitted them to revisit their country; subscribed the bond, by which, to use the words of the governor Arran, they were tied in fetters to England; confirmed it with their oath; and, having left hostages in the hands of that

¹ Original letter of Sir G. Douglas, in State-paper Office, dated January 10, 1542-3, to Lord Lisle, the English warden:—“Yff it pleases God that I continewe with the lyf and helthe, I shall do my soverain lord and maister gud servyce be the helpe of God; and yff I dey, I shall depart his trewe servand.”

² Sadler's State Papers, vol. i. pp. 69, 74, 75, 81.

³ Sadler's State Papers, vol. i. p. 97.

monarch, prepared to set out on their return.¹ On their arrival, they cautiously abstained from revealing the full extent of their obligation, and spoke in general terms upon the advantages to be derived from the marriage with England. At the same time it is not to be forgotten, in justice to the Scottish aristocracy, that whilst its leading members did not scruple to sign this unworthy agreement, the majority of the prisoners taken at the Solway remained in captivity in England. It cannot, however, be affirmed with certainty that to them Henry had presented the same temptation which overcame the virtue of their more wealthy and influential brethren. I have been thus minute in describing the transaction which took place between the English monarch and his prisoners, because it was afterwards attended with important consequences, and has not been noticed by any former historian with either the care or the full reprobation which it deserves.

Whilst such was the policy adopted by Henry, the sudden death of James the Fifth gave rise to a very opposite course of events in Scotland; it left that country once more exposed to all the evils of a minority, and divided by two great parties. Of these, the first, and that which had hitherto been the strongest, was the body of the Catholic clergy, at the head of which stood the cardinal Beaton, a man possessed certainly of high talents, and far superior in habits of business, acquaintance with human character, and the energetic pursuit of his purposes, to his opponents; but profligate in his private conduct, insatiable in his love of power, and attached to the Roman Catholic faith with a devotedness which, without any breach of charity, we may pronounce as much the offspring of ambition, as the result of conviction. Of this faction the guiding principles were a determined opposition to the progress of the Reformation, and a devotion to the papal see,—friendship with France, hostility to England; and a resolution, which all must applaud,

of preserving the ancient independence of their country. To them the late king, more from political motives than anything like personal bigotry, had lent the important strength of the royal favour and countenance.

In the ranks of the opposite faction were found a considerable portion of the nobility, of whom many of the leading chiefs favoured the doctrines of the Reformation, whilst all had viewed with alarm the late severe measures of the king. They were led by the Earl of Arran: a man of an amiable disposition, but indolent in his habits, and unhappily of that undecided temper which unfitted him to act with energy and success in times of so much confusion and difficulty. His bias to the reformed opinions was well known, and his royal rank, as nearest in succession to the crown, compelled him to assume an authority from which his natural character was inclined to shrink. It was to this party, whose weight was now to be increased by the accession of Angus and the Douglases, that Henry looked for his principal supporters; and considering the promises which he had received from the prisoners taken at the Solway Moss, he entertained little doubt of carrying his project in the Scottish parliament.

With regard to the great body of the people, of which we must remember that the middle and commercial classes alone possessed any influence in the government, they appear to have been animated at this time by somewhat discordant feelings. Many favoured the principles of the Reformation, and, so far as these were concerned, gave a negative support to Henry by their hostility to the cardinal and his party; but their sense of national independence, and their jealousy of England as the ancient enemy of their country, was a deep-seated feeling, which was ready to erect itself into active opposition on the slightest assumption of superiority by the rival kingdom. The conviction of this ought to have put Henry on his guard; but it was the frequent misfortune of this monarch, to lose his

¹ Maitland, vol. ii. p. 838.

highest advantages by the arrogance and violence with which he pursued them.

Immediately after the death of the king, the cardinal produced a paper which he declared to be the will of the late monarch. It is asserted by most of our historians, and the story was confirmed by the positive testimony of the Earl of Arran,¹ that this was a forged instrument procured by guiding the king's hand upon the paper when he was in his last extremity, and utterly insensible to its contents. It is certain that it appointed Beaton guardian to the infant queen, and chief governor of the realm, with the assistance of a council composed of the Earls of Argyle, Huntly, and Moray, all of whom were devoted to his service; and without giving his opponents time or opportunity to examine its provisions, or ascertain its authenticity, the cardinal had himself proclaimed regent, and hastened to assume the active management of the state. But his power, though great, was not sufficient to support him for above a few days in so bold a usurpation: the nobility assembled, and Arran, rousing himself from his constitutional indolence, claimed the office of regent, insisting that by law it belonged to him as next heir to the crown;² the pretended will he described as a forged document, to which no faith was to be attached, and, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the cardinal, his claim was universally admitted. He was chosen governor, and solemnly installed in his office on the 22d of December 1542. Arrangements were then made for the maintenance of the household of the young queen, and her mother the queen-dowager, whilst it

¹ Sadler's State Papers, vol. i. p. 138.

² Knox, History, p. 35. Letter, State-paper Office, January 10, 1542-3: Sir George Douglas to Lord Lisle, informing him he had received a safe-conduct from the Earl of Arran, calling himself governor, and proposed setting out that night for Edinburgh. Also Letter, State-paper Office, from the Earls of Cassillis and Glencairn, with the Lords Fleming and Maxwell, to Henry the Eighth, dated 19th of January, 1542-3, Carlisle. On the 20th of January they are to set out for Scotland.

was determined that the Earl of Angus and the Douglasses, who had been doomed to so long a banishment in England, should be restored to their possessions, and admitted to that share in the government which belonged to their high rank. A remarkable circumstance increased the power and popularity of Arran, and the dread with which the country regarded the cardinal. Upon the king's person at the time of his death was found a secret scroll, containing the names of above three hundred and sixty of the nobility and gentry who were suspected of entertaining heretical opinions, and whose estates on this ground were recommended to be confiscated for the support of the king.³ This private list, it was affirmed, had been furnished by Beaton, immediately after the refusal of the army to invade England, and although James rejected, on a former occasion, all such proposals, as a base project of the clergy to sow dissensions between himself and his nobles, it was suspected that his resolution had, after the rout of the Solway, given way to the entreaties of the cardinal. At the head of these names stood Arran; and it may easily be believed, that with those of the common people who favoured the Reformation, and the nobles who were enemies to the Church of Rome, such a discovery produced a community of interests and an inveteracy of feeling which added no little strength to the party of the governor.

Although defeated in his first attempt to seize on the supreme power, Beaton was not discouraged. He despatched messengers to France, representing to the house of Guise the crisis to which affairs had arrived in Scotland, the extreme danger attending a union between the Prince of Wales and their infant queen, the peril which threatened the Church, and the necessity of an immediate supply of money, arms, and soldiers, to enable him to maintain the struggle against his opponents:⁴ he worked upon the fears of those whom he knew to be sincere lovers of

³ Sadler's State Papers, vol. i. p. 94.

⁴ Ibid., vol. i. p. 138.

their country, by assuring them that the marriage which was now talked of so lightly, was nothing less than a project for the entire destruction of Scotland as an independent kingdom; and he procured the support of the middle and commercial classes by reminding them of the unprovoked seizure of their merchantmen by Henry, during a time of peace; declaiming against the injustice which prompted that prince still to detain their vessels and enrich himself with their cargoes. All these means were not without effect; and it began to be suspected that, notwithstanding his first repulse, the simplicity and indolence of Arran would not long be able to hold its ground against the energy of so talented and daring an enemy as the cardinal.

Such appears to have been the state of parties when the Scottish prisoners, the Earls of Cassillis and Glencairn, with the Lords Fleming, Maxwell, Somerville, and Oliphant, took their departure from London. They were preceded in their journey by Angus and Sir George Douglas, who left the English court ten days before them, and posted down to Edinburgh for the purpose of conducting the first and most delicate part of the negotiation regarding the marriage. On their arrival a council was held by the governor, in which the projected matrimonial alliance between the kingdoms was discussed in a general manner, and received with that favourable consideration with which at first sight all were disposed to regard it. It is here necessary to keep in mind that Sir George Douglas, who was the main agent of the English monarch in this negotiation, had three great objects in view, all of which he seems to have pursued with a prudence and diplomatic craft which prove him to have been no mean adept in the management of state intrigue. The reversal of his own and his brother's treason, and their restoration to their estates, was to be his first step; the procuring the consent of the Scottish parliament to the marriage, the second; and the last and most important of all, the obtaining the delivery to Henry of the

person of the infant queen, the surrender of the fortresses of the kingdom, and the consent of the three estates to have the country placed under the government of England. It is certain, from the authentic correspondence which yet remains, that Douglas and some of the Scottish prisoners had promised the English king their utmost endeavours to attain all these objects, the last of which amounted to an act of treason; but they were compelled to proceed with great wariness. They knew well that the first mention of such ignominious conditions would rouse the country and the parliament to a determined opposition,¹ and that all who would have welcomed upon fair terms the prospect of a matrimonial union between the kingdoms, would yet have scorned to purchase it at the price of their independence. It became necessary, therefore, to feel their way and commence with caution, so that, at the council which was held immediately after their return to Edinburgh, no whisper of such ultimate designs was suffered to escape them.

All their efforts, however, could not prevent the cardinal from becoming acquainted with their intrigues, and the use which he made of this knowledge in strengthening his party convinced them that, if so active an enemy were left at large, they could hardly hope for success; a secret resolution was therefore formed, and executed with that daring promptitude which so often leads to success. Beaton, whose correspondence with France was construed into treason, was suddenly arrested, (20th January 1542-3,) and, before he had time to summon his friends, or protest against such injustice, hurried to the castle of Blackness, and committed to the custody of

¹ See the Letter in the State-paper Office. Lord Lisle to the Duke of Suffolk, dated Berwick, 2d of February 1542-3:—"I asked him whether he had begun to practice with his frindes, touchyng the king's majesty's purpose. He said it was not tyme yet, for altho he and his broder had manye frindes, he durst not move the matter as yet to none of them; for if he shuld, he is sure they wold starte from them, everie man."

Lord Seton.¹ Having thus boldly begun, proclamation was made that every man, under pain of treason, should resist the landing of any army from France,—a suspicion having arisen, that a fleet which had been seen off Holy Island was a squadron led by the Duke of Guise, for the invasion of Scotland. It soon appeared, however, to be some Scottish ships of war, with nineteen English prizes, which they afterwards brought safely into harbour. A parliament was appointed to be held on the 12th of March for the discussion of the proposed alliance with England, and the condemnation of the cardinal; whilst it was proposed that Henry should immediately grant an abstinence of war, and a safe-conduct to the Scottish ambassadors, who were to conclude a perpetual peace between the two realms.

The seizure of the cardinal, however, was attended with effects which his opponents had not anticipated. The public services of religion were suspended; the priests refused to administer the sacraments of baptism and burial; the churches were closed: a universal gloom overspread the countenances of the people; and the country presented the melancholy appearance of a land excommunicated for some awful crime. The days, indeed, were past, when the full terrors of such a state of spiritual proscription could be felt, yet the Catholic party were still strong in Scotland; they loudly exclaimed against their opponents for so daring an act of sacrilege and injustice; and the people began, in some degree, to identify the cause of Beaton with the independence of the country, exclaiming against the Douglases and the Scottish prisoners

as the pensioners of England.² It was suspected, that more was concealed under the proposed marriage and alliance with England than the friends of Henry dared as yet avow; cabals were formed amongst the nobles; and the Earls of Huntly, Bothwell, and Moray, offering themselves as surety for the appearance of the cardinal to answer the charges against him, imperiously demanded that he should be set at liberty. The refusal of this request by the governor and the Douglases convinced their opponents that their suspicions were not without foundation; Argyle, one of the ablest and most powerful amongst the barons, retired to his own country, with the object of mustering his strength, and providing for the storm which he saw approaching; whilst the mutual jealousies and animosities amongst those left behind gathered strength so rapidly, that it seemed probable they must lead to some alarming civil commotion.³

This fatal result was likely to be hastened by the conduct of the English king. Incensed to the utmost degree against the cardinal, whom the Pope had recently appointed legate *a latere* in Scotland, he insisted on his being delivered into his hands to be imprisoned in England.⁴ He pressed the Earl of Angus and his Scottish

² Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Thomas Wharton to the Duke of Suffolk, Carlisle, February 2, 1542-3. See also an important letter, Lord Lisle to the Duke of Suffolk, dated February 1, 1542-3, at Berwick:—"And consideryng this busynes that is upon the takyng of the cardinal, whiche, at this present, is at such a staye, that they can cause no priest within Scotland to saye masse syns the cardinal was taken, neyder to crysten or burye."

³ Letter, *ut supra*. Sir Thomas Wharton to the Duke of Suffolk. State-paper Office.

⁴ Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Lisle to Duke of Suffolk, February 2, 1542-3. "I asked hym whether his broder and he wold deliver the cardynal to the king's majesty — if his highness to have hym. Whereat he (Sir George Douglas) studied a lyttel, and said that if they shulde doo so, they (should be) mistraisted as of England's partie, but that he suld be as surely kept as if he were in England, for neyther governor nor any oder in Scotland shall have hym out of their handes." The letter having suffered much by damp is difficult to decipher.

¹ Keith, p. 27. *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 26. Sadler's State Papers, vol. i. pp. 137, 138. MS. letter in State-paper Office, Sir Thomas Wharton to the Duke of Suffolk, February 2, 1542-3: "My said servant sheweth the ordre of the takyng of the cardinal, much after the form as I have wrytten. He saith he hard the proclamation made after the same at the cross in Edinburgh, by the governor and the noblemen with him, that his takyng was for certain treasons agaynst the realm, and not for any takyng away the funds of the churche."

prisoners to fulfil their promises regarding the surrender of the fortresses, and was highly dissatisfied when he found his orders not likely to be obeyed. In an interview between Sir George Douglas, and Lord Lisle the English warden, which took place at Berwick,¹ the Scottish baron endeavoured to convince him of the imprudence of thus attempting to precipitate so delicate an affair. He assured him that if the king were content to proceed with caution, he had little doubt of accomplishing his utmost wishes, but that at present the delivery of the cardinal, or the slightest attempt to seize the fortresses, would lead to certain failure. In the meantime he promised that Beaton, against whose talent and intrigue they could never be too much on their guard, should be as safely kept with them as he could be in England; and as the report still continued that the Duke of Guise was about to visit Scotland,² he agreed, at the suggestion of Lord Lisle, to alter their first resolution, which had been to grant this prince an interview, and to adopt the safer plan of interdicting him or his attendants from landing in any of the harbours of the kingdom. Convinced, or, at least, assuming the appearance of being satisfied by such representations, Henry consented to the prolongation of the abstinence of war till the month of June, and awaited, with as much patience as he could command, the meeting of the Scottish parliament. In the meantime he sent orders to Sir Ralph Sadler to repair instantly as his ambassador to Edinburgh, and he determined to keep a jealous watch on

¹ Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Lisle to the Duke of Suffolk, quoted above, February 2, 1542-3.

² Letter, State-paper Office, the Duke of Suffolk and council of the north to the privy-council, advising them of the appearance of a large fleet off Holy Island, supposed to be the Duke de Guise's squadron, dated at Newcastle, 3d February 1542-3.

³ Original agreement of abstinence of war, signed by James earl of Arran, as governor of Scotland, (State-paper Office,) dated February 20, 1542-3, in the name of Mary queen of Scotland; also, copy Agreement for Cessation of Hostilities on the part of Henry the Eighth

the proceedings of France, as it was now confidently asserted that the Duke of Guise and the Earl of Lennox had fitted out an expedition against Scotland in some of the ports of Normandy.⁴

Shortly before the meeting of parliament, an attempt was made by the Catholic party to counteract the intrigues of the English faction, which had now gained a complete command over the governor. The Earls of Huntly, Moray, Bothwell, and Argyle, supported by a powerful body of the barons and landed gentry, and a numerous concourse of bishops and abbots, assembled at Perth, avowing their determination to resist the measures of the governor and the Douglases. They despatched Reid, the bishop of Orkney, a prelate of primitive simplicity and integrity, with certain proposals to their opponents. Of these, the first insisted that the cardinal should be set at liberty, and that the New Testament should not be read in the vulgar tongue by the people; they demanded, at the same time, that the Scottish ambassadors who had been named by Henry should not be intrusted with the negotiation of the marriage, but others chosen in their stead, and they asserted their right to be consulted by the governor in all affairs of importance. It was not to be expected that Arran or his haughty councillors should for a moment listen to such a message. It was received with a scornful and positive refusal; and scarce had its authors time to recover from their disappointment, when they saw a herald-at-arms enter their assembly, who, in the name of the governor, and under the pain of treason, charged them to disperse their convocation, and return to their duty and allegiance. Nor did they dare to disobey the summons. The penalties of treason to which they knew their rivals in power would not be loath to subject them, were of too serious a kind to be despised, and, after a brief

⁴ Privy-council of England to the Duke of Suffolk, March 13, 1542-3. State-paper Office. Earl of Arran to the Duke of Suffolk, March 8, 1542-3. State-paper Office.

deliberation, they determined to adopt the safest course. On the day previous to the meeting of the three Estates, the Earl of Huntly sent in his adherence to the governor; and, under an assurance of safety, repaired to the capital to give his presence in the parliament; his example was followed by all the clergy assembled at Perth, as well as by the Earls of Moray and Bothwell; whilst Argyle, prevented by sickness from repairing to the parliament in person, sent his procuratory and his two uncles to plead his apology. They had evidently miscalculated their strength, and observing the number and the vigour of their opponents, deemed it prudent not to push matters to extremity, trusting by their influence in the great council of the nation, to neutralise the obsequious spirit of the English faction, and if they consented to the marriage, to fetter it at least with such conditions as should insure the independence of their country; nor were they disappointed in their endeavours.¹

¹ These important particulars of the meeting held at Perth by the rival lords previous to the parliament are new to Scottish history. They are collected from an original letter preserved in the State-paper Office, dated March 16, 1542-3, addressed by the Earl of Angus and his brother Sir George Douglas to Lord Lisle. It will be published in its entire state in the volume of Scottish correspondence during the reign of Henry the Eighth, which is about to be printed by Government; in the meantime a short extract may not be uninteresting to the reader:—"The Parliament began the 12th of March, and the ouke before, thare convenit in the toune of Perth th' Erles of Huntley, Ergyle, Murray, and Boithwell, with ane gret noumer of bishoppis and abbotis, baronis and knightis, and so the forsaidis lordis sent the Bischop of Orkney, and Sir John Campbell of Caldour, knyght, uncle to the Erle of Ergyle, with certaine artiklis to my lord governour and counsale being with him. Ane of the principale artiklis was to put the cardinal to liberte, and ane other was that the New Testament shuld not go abroide. The third article was that the governour shuld be usit and counsalit be thame in all th' affaires. The forde was that the ambassiatouris that ar contenit in the saufconduct come fro the kingis majeste, that thai walde not be contenit that thai shuld pas in England, but walde have others of thare chesing. My lord governour, with avis of us and of his counsale, maid thame ane final answer, That he wuld grant them, no

On the 12th of March, the parliament assembled, and its proceedings were marked by a firmness and prudence which was little agreeable to the impetuous desires of the English king. After the important preliminaries had been gone through of confirming the choice of Arran as governor of the realm and tutor to the young queen, on the ground of his being next in succession to the crown, the Archbishop of Glasgow, then chancellor, broughtforward the proposals of Henry regarding the treaty of peace, and marriage of his son, the Prince of Wales, with their infant sovereign; whilst he exhibited the instructions which were to be delivered to their ambassadors, who, it was agreed, should immediately

such unreasonable desires; and incontinent after the departure of the said bishop and knyght we sent one heralde of armes unto the saidis lordis at Perth, chargeing thame under the payne of trayson to cum and serue the governour, for the welth of the realme, according to their dewty and allegiance. Thir forsaid lordis pretendit to have made one partie if thai had bene able, and my lord governour and we agane preparit ourselves with all the gentilmen and servynghmen that langit unto us to ane gud nowmer, and ane weel favorit company purposing to proceed in our parliament in despyte of all thame wald say the contrarie. And than the saidis lordis seeing this, that thai mycht not mak thare partie gud, th' Erle of Huntly sent unto the governour and to us saying that he wald com, and do his dewtie to the governour, and mouche the rather for our cause; considering the proximite of blude that was betwix us. And so be our advise the governour was contentit to give him assurance to com and serve him in the said parliament, and so the said erle came in on Sunday, the 11th Marche; and on Monday the 12th of the same the erle of Murray sent and desyrif he mycht cum and serve the governour, and we acceptit him in lyk maner; and upon Twysday th' erle Boithwell sent to us ane letter and desyrif us that he mycht cum and serve the governour in this present parliament, and we movit the same to the governour, and he being contentit thairwith the said Erle Boithwell com in on Weddynsay, the 14th of this month. And all the clergy boith bischoppis and abbotis com into the said parliament upon Sounday, the 11th hereof, and all the greater men of Scotland, convenit to the said parliament boith spirituale and temporall, except the Erle of Ergyle allanerly, who is sore sick, and sent his procurator with his two uncles to mak his excuse the 15th of Marche. . . . It has bene the moist substanciall parliament that ever was sene in Scotland in ony mannis rememberance, and best furnist with all the three estatis."

proceed to England for the negotiation of this alliance. These, however, were widely different from what Henry had expected. The parliament refused to deliver the queen till she had attained the full age of ten years; they declined to surrender any of the fortresses of the kingdom, and the whole deliberations were conducted with a jealous attention to the preservation of the liberties of Scotland as a separate and independent kingdom. That realm was to retain its name, its laws, its ancient courts, officers, and immunities. It was stipulated that, even after the marriage was concluded, whether there was issue or not, the kingdom of Scotland should continue to be governed by a native ruler; and the proviso was subjoined, that in the event of the failure of the heirs of such marriage, the nearest lawful successor should immediately succeed to the crown, without question or difficulty.¹ Under such restrictions the proposal of a matrimonial alliance was welcomed as likely to produce the most favourable effects on the mutual prosperity of both kingdoms; and Balnaves, the secretary, Sir James Learmont, the treasurer, with Sir William Hamilton of Sanquhar, were chosen as ambassadors to the court of England.

The parliament then proceeded to reverse the attainer of Angus and the Douglases, restoring them to their estates and their honours; they selected the Earls Marshal and Montrose, with the Lords Erskine, Ruthven, Lindsay, Livingston, and Seton, to be keepers of the queen's person; they appointed the governor a council, which was far too numerous to be efficient; and they determined that, for the present, the young queen should hold her court, under the eye of her mother, the queen dowager, at the palace of Linlithgow. Parliament was then prorogued to the 17th of March, whilst the committee known by the name of the Lords of the Articles continued their sittings for the introduction of such statutes as were esteemed beneficial to the general interests of

the kingdom. Amongst these, one provision stands pre-eminent for its important effects in spreading the light of truth, and accelerating the progress of the Reformation. Lord Maxwell, when a prisoner in England, had become a convert to its doctrines, and proposed that all might have liberty to read the Bible in an approved Scots or English translation, provided none disputed on the controverted opinions. Against this the Archbishop of Glasgow solemnly protested for himself and the ecclesiastical estate in parliament till the matter should be debated in a provincial council; but the proposition obtained the consent of the Lords of the Articles, and was publicly ratified by the governor. Arran, indeed, was at this time esteemed, to use the words of Knox, one of the most fervent Protestants in Europe. He entertained in his service two celebrated preachers, Friar Williams and John Rough, who inveighed with much severity against the corruptions of the Romish Church; and under his protection the Holy Scriptures began to be studied very generally throughout the country.

Sadler, the English ambassador, now arrived in Edinburgh, and with great diplomatic ability earnestly laboured to obtain more favourable terms. No effort was left untried to shake the resolution and corrupt the integrity of the governor: his fears were attempted to be roused by threats of war; his ambition was worked on by the promise of a marriage between his son and the Princess Elizabeth of England; but although indolent and timid as a politician, Arran possessed a high sense of honour, and no persuasions could induce him to depart from the resolution of the three estates. Nor was Sadler more successful with others to whom he applied. In a letter to the king, written a short time after the prorogation of the parliament, he lamented that his utmost endeavours were insufficient to bring them to consent to the wishes of his master. They would rather, he assured Henry, suffer any extremity than come to the obedience and subjection of England,

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 411-413.

being determined to have their realm free, and to retain their ancient laws and customs; yet he acknowledged that the nobles and the whole temporality desired the marriage, and were anxious to remain at peace; whilst he expressed an opinion that this event would be followed by a renunciation of their alliance with France, and might possibly, in the progress of time, induce them to fall to the obedience and devotion of England. In the same despatch, however, the enmity of the churchmen to the marriage and union with England is represented as deep and universal.¹

The haughty temper of the English monarch was irritated by the opposition to his favourite scheme, and the measures which he adopted were violent and impolitic. He upbraided Angus, Glencairn, and the rest of his prisoners with a breach of their promises; he assured them that he had no intention to recede from even the smallest portion of his demands, and that, if necessary, he would by force compel the Scots to deliver to him their infant queen, in which case they must prepare themselves either to return to their imprisonment in England, or assist him, according to their solemn agreement, in the conquest of the country; but an event which soon after occurred convinced him that it was easier to form than to realise such intentions. Beaton, who, since his imprisonment, had not ceased to keep up a communication with his party, contrived suddenly, and somewhat mysteriously, to recover his liberty. He had been delivered by Arran into the custody of Lord Seton, a near relative of the Hamiltons, but a nobleman distinguished for his hereditary loyalty and his attachment to the Catholic faith. This peer, if we may believe the asseverations of the governor, under pretence of inducing Beaton to deliver up his castle of St Andrews,

¹ Sir R. Sadler to one of the council of the north, dated 27th March 1543. State-paper Office. "In myn opinion they had lever suffre extremyte than com to the obedienys and subjection of England—they woul have their own realm free and live within themselves after their own lawes and custumes."

permitted the cardinal to remove from Blackness to this fortress. Thither he was accompanied by Seton, but with so small a force, that the prelate, instead of a captive, remained master in his own palace; and as no attempt was made to punish, or even to examine his keeper, it is difficult to resist the inference that Arran was secretly not displeased at his escape.² Hamilton, abbot of Paisley, the natural brother of the governor, and an ecclesiastic of considerable political ability, had returned from France a short time previous to the enlargement of Beaton,³ and was probably concerned in the plot which led to his liberation. It is at least certain that he soon exercised a considerable influence over the vacillating mind of the governor, and the cardinal endeavoured through his means to promote a coalition between their parties. He declared himself anxious, by every lawful means, to support the government, repelled with indignation the assertion that he had entered into any treasonable correspondence with France, and declared himself ready at any time to surrender his person for the trial of his innocence.⁴ He even despatched his chaplain to Sadler, the English ambassador, with the object of removing from the mind of his master, the king of England, the violent prejudices which had been conceived against him. None, he affirmed, was more ready than himself to acknowledge the beneficial effects which must result from a union between the two kingdoms, to accomplish which he would serve the English monarch as sincerely as any of his supporters, with this only difference, that he would fulfil his duty to the country of which he was a subject, and anxiously provide for the preservation of its freedom and independence.⁵ It is difficult to estimate the exact proportion of sincerity which entered into these professions, but the last condition was directly opposed to the impious projects of Henry, who imagined

² Sadler's State-papers, vol. i. p. 137.

³ Ibid., vol. i. p. 117.

⁴ Ibid., vol. i. p. 131.

⁵ Ibid., vol. i. pp. 131, 133.

the time had arrived when Scotland was for ever to be incorporated with the English monarchy. He rejected them accordingly with ill-advised precipitation; and both parties became aware that, unless some unforeseen changes took place, all hope of an amicable issue was at an end.

In the meantime, the Scottish ambassadors arrived at the English court, and on being admitted to their audience, explained to the monarch the conditions upon which the parliament were ready to give their consent to a marriage.¹ Henry declared himself deeply dissatisfied. He first insisted on the immediate delivery of the infant queen, but afterwards relaxed so far in his requisitions as to consent she should remain in her own kingdom till she had completed the age of two years. He talked idly of his right, as lord superior to the realm of Scotland,² and in virtue of this, contended that the government of that kingdom ought to be resigned into his hands without question or delay. Such demands the Scottish ambassadors resisted with firmness, and in a subsequent meeting with the English commissioners to confer upon the marriage, they did not conceal their opinion that the first notice of such terms would render any treaty between the two countries completely impracticable. Nor were they deceived in their expectations. The extraordinary demands of Henry were received in Scotland with a universal burst of indignation; and the anticipations of the Douglases and their faction, who had in vain besought him to unveil his designs more cautiously, were completely fulfilled. Even the governor, who was described by Sir George Douglas to Sadler as a very gentle creature, resented with becoming spirit the indignity with which he

had been treated; and Beaton gained from the violence and indiscretion of his adversary a strength and popularity which some months before he had in vain attempted to acquire by his own efforts.

The cardinal was not slow in availing himself of this advantage. Some time previous to this, the Earl of Lennox had returned to Scotland by the advice of the cardinal, and with the concurrence of Francis the First, in whose Italian wars he had received his education.³ The object of Beaton was to render Arran subservient to his designs by raising a rival to him in the Earl of Lennox. The near relationship between this young noble and the royal family, and a report which was circulated at this time, that the late king, in the event of his dying without children, had selected him as his successor in the throne, excited the jealousy and apprehensions of the governor. Beaton, on the other hand, did not scruple to encourage the ambition of Lennox by holding out the hope of a marriage with the queen dowager; and it was even hinted by the clergy, that in consequence of some informality in the divorce between the father of Arran and his second wife, the governor, who was the issue of a third marriage, had no legitimate title either to his paternal property, or to the high office which he held. Could this have been made out, Lennox was unquestionably not only the next heir to these immense estates, but possessed, on the same grounds, a preferable claim to the regency; and it is easy to understand how all these concurring circumstances must have shaken the resolution of Arran, and rendered Lennox a formidable instrument in the hands of so artful a politician as the cardinal.⁴

These, however, were far from the only means which he employed. He had early opened a negotiation with France; and Francis the First, aware of the importance of preserving his amicable relations with Scotland, em-

¹ They set off from Edinburgh on the 23d of March 1542-3. Sadler, vol. i. p. 90.

² It is to be regretted that there should be a revival of this question in the present day; but to those who feel any interest in the controversy, I would recommend the able "Vindication of the Independence of Scotland," by Mr Allen. The meeting between Henry and the Scottish commissioners probably took place some time about the 10th or 12th of April.

³ Lesley, p. 173. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 27.

⁴ Maitland, vol. ii. p. 842.

powered Lennox to promise assistance, both in arms and money, to the party opposed to Henry. He took every opportunity of enlisting upon his side the affections and the prejudices of the middle and the lower classes of the people,—promulgating, through the medium of the clergy, the insolent demands of the English monarch, and exciting their resentment against those persons amongst the nobility whom he justly represented as having sold to Henry their services against their native country.

The consequences of all this were soon apparent, and appeared to promise the cardinal a speedy triumph over his enemies. Arran, the governor, in whose vacillating character there was a strong love of popularity, became alienated from the English party. He declared openly, that he would sooner abide the extremity of war than consent to the demands of Henry; and, equally irresolute in his religion as in his politics, dismissed Friar Williams and John Rough, his two Protestant chaplains, whom, till then, he had retained in his family.¹ The people, also, were now so universally opposed to the renunciation of the amity with France, that Glencairn and Cassillis did not hesitate to inform the English ambassador they would sooner die than agree to this condition. Such, indeed, was the exacerbation of national feeling upon the subject, that Sadler could not venture abroad without being exposed to insult; whilst the peers who were in the interest of Henry complained to the ambassador that their devotion to England rendered them the objects of universal hatred and contempt.²

To counteract, if possible, this state of things, which seemed to threaten the total wreck of his favourite schemes, Henry was prevailed upon by Sir George Douglas, who privately visited him in England, to relax in the rigour of his demands. By his advice, the immediate delivery of the infant queen, the surrender of the fortresses, and the resignation of the government into

the hands of the English sovereign, were abandoned as hopeless and extravagant conditions, the mention of which had already materially injured his cause; and the artful envoy returned to Scotland with proposals for the conclusion of the peace, and marriage upon a more equitable basis.³ He was instructed, also, to flatter the vanity of the governor, by renewing, on the part of Henry, his former proposal of a marriage between the Princess Elizabeth and Arran's eldest son; and so successfully did he labour, that, in a convention of the nobility, held in April, which, however, was principally composed of those peers and their adherents who were in the interest of England, it was resolved to despatch Sir George Douglas and the Earl of Glencairn as assistants to the ambassadors already there, in the negotiation of the treaty of marriage and alliance, which had been so abruptly broken off by the violence and arrogance of Henry.

In the meantime, the opposite party were not idle, and the talents of the cardinal were exerted against the faction of Henry with formidable success. Lennox, who, till this time, had wavered, went over to Beaton; and being admitted to an audience by the governor, delivered a flattering message from the French king, containing expressions of the warmest friendship, promising immediate assistance in troops and money, should England attempt an invasion, and declaring his resolution to preserve the ancient league between the two kingdoms as the firmest basis of their mutual prosperity.⁴ This proposal Arran, for the present, evaded by a general answer; but the cardinal, the queen-dowager, and their friends, did not lose the opportunity. They entered into a nego-

¹ In the State-paper Office are preserved two original documents, containing the instructions given to Sir George Douglas. One of them, dated May 1, 1543, is a short paper in the handwriting of Secretary Wriothesley. It is thus entitled: “The be th’ articles which he thought so reasonable, that if the ambassadors of Scotland will not agree to them, then it shall be mete the king’s majestie to follow out his purpose by force.”

² Sadler, vol. i. p. 163.

¹ Sadler's State-papers, vol. i. p. 158.

² Ibid., p. 165.

tiation with France, in which it was agreed that a force of two thousand men, under the command of Montgomerie, Sieur de Lorges, an officer of high military reputation, should be sent to Scotland; they encouraged their friends and adherents, by the hopes of powerful subsidies, to assemble their forces, garrison their castles, and keep themselves in readiness for the impending struggle; whilst Grimani, the Papal legate, with the still formidable weapons of ecclesiastical anathemas and processes of excommunication, was invited to accelerate his journey into Scotland. A convention of the clergy, at the same time, assembled at St Andrews, in which the probability of a war with England was discussed, and a resolution carried to ascertain and levy, without delay, the sum required in such an exigency. The assembly was pervaded with the utmost unanimity and enthusiasm; the cause which they were called upon to support was represented as not only that of the Church, but of their ancient freedom and national independence; the hearts of the people, and the patriotic feelings of the great majority of the nobility, responded to the sentiments which were uttered; and the clergy declared their readiness, not only to sacrifice their whole private fortunes, but to melt down the Church plate, and, were it necessary, themselves fight in the quarrel.¹

In the midst of all this opposition, the diplomatic talents of Sir George Douglas were unremittingly exerted to overcome the complicated difficulties which stood in the way of a general conciliation; and having returned from England with the ultimate resolutions of Henry, they were agreed to by the governor and a majority of the nobility, in a convention held at Edinburgh in the beginning of June.² Satisfied with this approval, although the absence of the cardinal, and many of the most influential peers, might have assured him that it would afterwards be questioned, he returned with expedition to England, and,

along with the Earl of Glencairn and the Scottish ambassadors, Learmont, Hamilton, and Balnaves, met the commissioners of the sister country at Greenwich, where the treaties of pacification and marriage were finally arranged on the 1st of July.³ The terms were certainly far more favourable than those which had been at first proposed by the English monarch. It was agreed that a marriage should take place between the Prince of Wales and Mary, queen of Scots, as soon as that princess had reached majority, and that an inviolable peace should subsist between the kingdoms during the lives of these two royal persons, which was to continue for a year after the death of the first who should pay the debt of nature. Till she had completed her tenth year, the young Mary was to remain in Scotland under the care of the guardians appointed by the parliament; Henry being permitted to send thither an English nobleman, with his wife and attendants, to form part of the household of the princess. Within a month after she entered her eleventh year, the estates of Scotland solemnly promised to deliver their princess at Berwick to the commissioners appointed to receive her; and as hostages for the fulfilment of this condition, two earls and four barons were to be sent forthwith to England. It was carefully provided that, even if the queen should have issue by the prince, the kingdom of Scotland should retain its name, and be governed by its ancient laws. It had been earnestly desired that the treaty should include a positive abrogation of the long-established league between France and Scotland; but instead of being "friends to friends, and enemies to enemies," the utmost that could be procured was the insertion of a clause, by which it was agreed that neither should afford assistance to any foreign aggressor, notwithstanding any former stipulation upon this subject.

It is apparent that, in this treaty, Henry abandoned the most obnoxious part of his demands; and had the

¹ Sadler's State-papers, vol. i. p. 204.

² Ibid., pp. 212, 213.

³ Rymer, Fœdera, vol. xiv. pp. 786-791.

English monarch, and the Scottish nobles who were in his interest, acted with good faith, little ground of objection to the proposed marriage and pacification could have been left to their opponents. But, whilst such were all the articles which *openly* appeared, a private transaction, or "*secret device*," as it is termed in the original papers which now, for the first time, reveal its existence, was entered into between Henry and his partisans, Maxwell, Glencairn, Angus, and the rest, which was at once of a very unjustifiable description, and calculated to exasperate their adversaries in a high degree. An agreement appears to have been drawn up by the English commissioners, for the signature of the Scottish peers and barons taken at the Solway, by which they once more tied themselves to his service; and, forgetting their allegiance to their natural prince, promised, in the event of any commotion in Scotland, to adhere solely to the interest of the English monarch, "so that he should attain all the things then pacted and covenanted, or, at the least, the dominion on this side the Firth."¹ In the same treaty the precise sums of ransom to be exacted from the Scottish prisoners taken at the Solway were fixed by the commissioners; but, before they were permitted to avail themselves of this means for the recovery of their liberty, it appears to

¹ The proof of this transaction is to be found in a paper preserved in the State-paper Office, and dated July 1, 1543, entitled, "Copy of the Secret Devise." It contains this passage:—"Fourthly, if ther happen any division or trouble to arise in Scotland, by practice of the cardinal, kyrmen, France, or otherwise, I shall sticke and adhere only to the king's majesty's service, as his highness maye assuredly atteyne these things noe pacted and covenanted, or, at the least, the domynion on this side the Freythe." This explains an obscure passage in Sadler's State-papers, vol. i. p. 237, "The said Earl of Angus hath subscribed the articles of the devise which your majesty sent unto me with your last letters, and the Lord Maxwell telleth me that, as soon as he received the like articles from your majesty by his son, he forthwith subscribed the same. The rest I have not yet spoken with, because they be not here, but as soon as I can I shall not fail to accomplish that part according to your gracious commandment."

have been a condition, that they should sign this agreement which has been above described. In the meantime, the negotiations having been concluded, peace was soon afterwards proclaimed between the two countries, and the ambassadors returned to Edinburgh with the hope that the treaties would immediately be ratified by the governor and the parliament.

To their mortification, however, they discovered that, in the interval of their absence, Beaton, who had in all probability obtained information of this second combination of Henry and his Scottish prisoners against the independence of the country, had succeeded in consolidating a formidable opposition. The English monarch had at this moment resolved on a war with France; and any delay in the proposed alliance with Scotland inflamed the haughty impatience of his temper. His resentment against the cardinal, with whose practices Sadler his ambassador did not fail to acquaint him, now rose to a high pitch, and he repeatedly urged the governor and his partisans to seize and imprison the prelate. Such, however, were the vigilance and ability of this energetic ecclesiastic, that he not only escaped the snares, but for a while defeated the utmost efforts of his enemies; and many of the nobles, becoming aware of the plots which were in agitation for the subjugation of Scotland, eagerly joined his party, and prepared by arms to assert their freedom. With this object the cardinal and the Earl of Huntly concentrated their forces in the north, Argyle and Lennox in the west, whilst Bothwell, Home, and the Laird of Buccleuch, mustered their feudal array upon the Borders.² They declared that they were compelled to adopt these measures for the protection of the faith and holy Church, and the defence of the independence of the realm, which had been sold to Henry by Arran, whom they stigmatised as a heretic and an Englishman.³ So far as it concerned the preservation of what they believed the only true

² Sadler, vol. i. p. 236.

³ Ibid., pp. 233, 234.

faith, their opposition was defeated; whilst the great cause of the Reformation, gaining ground by slow degrees, was destined to be ultimately triumphant. But it is not to be denied that their accusations regarding the sacrifice of the liberty of the country by its weak governor, were founded in justice. We know from the high authority of Sadler the English ambassador, that Arran boasted of his English descent; that he eagerly received the money sent him by Henry, and professed his anxiety for the accomplishment of all his desires. Nor was this all: he entertained, though he did not accept, a proposal of the English monarch to make him King of Scotland beyond the Firth; and he proposed that, in the event of the cardinal becoming too powerful for him, an army should be sent to invade the country, with which he and his friends might effectually co-operate, alleging that by this means, although forsaken by their countrymen, he doubted not that the whole realm might be forcibly reduced under the subjection of England.¹ It is not matter of surprise, therefore, that Beaton, as soon as he became aware of this disposition, of the urgent desire of Henry for the seizure of his person, and of the still more dangerous intrigues of the Scottish prisoners for the subjugation of the realm, should have exerted every effort to defeat their intentions.

So bitter and indignant indeed were his feelings, that, if we may believe an extraordinary story which is found in a letter of the Duke of Suffolk to Sir R. Sadler, the cardinal had challenged Sir Ralph Eure, warden of the marches, to a personal combat, on some ground of quarrel which does not appear. The challenge was communicated to Henry, who, considering it in a serious light, intimated his wishes that Eure should fight with Beaton in Edinburgh. The whole matter evinces the credulity of the English ambassador and his royal master, for we cannot believe that the prelate could have contemplated so

disgraceful an adventure; and the conjecture of Suffolk, that it originated in the insolence of a moss-trooper, whom he characterises as one of the strongest Border-thieves in Scotland, is probably not far from the truth.²

During these transactions the young queen remained in the palace of Linlithgow, under the nominal charge of the queen-dowager, but so strictly guarded by the governor and the Hamiltons, that her residence was little else than an honourable imprisonment. To obtain possession of her person was now the first object of the cardinal's party; and, whether by the connivance of her immediate guardians, or from some relaxation in the vigilance of Arran, they at last succeeded. Marching from Stirling at the head of a force of ten thousand men, Lennox, Huntly, and Argyle proceeded towards the capital, and were joined at Leith by Bothwell, with the Kers and the Scotts, forming a combined army, which Arran and the Douglases did not find themselves able to resist. After an ineffectual attempt to temporise, which was defeated by the energy of his opponents, the governor consented to surrender his royal charge; and the infant queen, with the queen-dowager, who secretly rejoiced at the change, were conducted by Lennox in triumph to Stirling.³

² Letter in State-paper Office, Duke of Suffolk and the Bishop of Durham to Sir Ralph Sadler, July 15, 1543:—"For we cannot thinke the cardinal wolde be so madde as to provoke and challenge any man that wolde fighte with him in the quarrell, or that he intends to fight, onelesse he shall thinke himselfe to be farre the stronger partie, and yet then we thinke he wolde stande alouf and look on rather than to come himselfe among knockes. We thinke rather this bragge is made by Clement Crosier, himselfe being one of the strongest thieves in Scotland, to stirre besynes and to lett the good peax, than that the cardinal was so madde to bydde him meddle in any such matter." Also letter in State-paper Office, July 20, 1543, Duke of Suffolk and the Privy-council to Lord Parr, touching the challenge.

³ Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 28. A valuable volume lately printed by the Bannatyne Club, from which the erroneous chronology of our general historians of this period may be sometimes corrected. It contains the best account of this transaction, the delivery of the queen, upon which Bu-

¹ Sadler, vol. i. pp. 216, 253, 256.

To Beaton this was an important accession of strength; and having so far succeeded in weakening his adversaries, he laboured to detach the governor from England, by holding out the prospect of a marriage between his son and the young Mary. Arran however resisted, or suspected the splendid bribe; and, in a convention of the nobles which was held on the 25th of August, in the abbey church of Holyrood, the treaties with England were ratified with solemn pomp, the governor swearing to their observance at the altar.¹ To this transaction, however, the cardinal and the powerful nobles with whom he acted were no parties. Not long before, they had remonstrated in strong terms against the mode of government pursued by Arran. They complained that, in the weightiest affairs of the realm, he was guided by the advice of a particular faction, excluding from his councils many of the highest nobles; and they warned him that, as long as this course was adopted, they would not consider themselves bound by their partial deliberations.² They insisted that the ratification of the treaties had been carried by private means, unauthorised by the authority of parliament, contrary to the opinion of a majority of the nobles, and to the wishes of the great body of the people; nor did they omit any method by which they might render Arran suspected and unpopular.

These devices began soon to produce the desired effect; and this was accelerated by one of those rash measures into which Henry was so frequently hurried by the impetuosity of his temper. Soon after the proclamation of peace, the Scottish merchants, who then carried on a lucrative foreign commerce, had despatched a fleet of merchantmen, which sought shelter from a storm in an English port. Here they deemed themselves secure; but, to their astonishment, they were detained, and, under the pretext that they

chanan, Lesley, Maitland, and other historians are obscure and contradictory.

¹ Sadler, vol. i. p. 270. August 25, 1543.

² Ibid., p. 251.

were carrying provisions into France, their cargoes were confiscated; a proceeding which so highly irritated the populace of Edinburgh, that they surrounded the house of the English ambassador, and threatened, his life, in case their ships were not restored.³

This last act of injustice and spoliation was attributed to the governor, who was known to be in the interest of Henry; and he began to feel that his subserviency had made him odious to all respectable classes in the community, and to dread, when it was almost too late, that he had engaged in a desperate enterprise. His friends, Angus, Cassillis, and Glencairn, with other barons attached to England, proposed to assemble their forces and prepare for immediate war; the time, they basely declared, was come, when Henry must send a main army into Scotland, with which they might co-operate in his conquest of the realm;⁴ and such was the exasperation of the two factions, that, in the opinion of the English ambassador, a hostile collision was impossible to be avoided. It was averted, however, by a revolution as sudden as it was extraordinary. On the 28th of August the governor, in an interview with Sir Ralph Sadler, expressed an entire devotedness to Henry, declaring that no prince alive should have his heart and service but the English monarch. On the 3d of September, before a week had elapsed, he met the cardinal at Callander House, the seat of Lord Livingston; all causes of animosity were removed, and a complete reconciliation with the prelate took place. Beaton, who a few days before had declined any con-

³ In the State-paper Office is a draft of a letter, dated 9th of September 1543, from the English king, in the handwriting of Wriothesley, secretary of state, threatening the magistrates of Edinburgh, to whom it is addressed, with punishment, if they maltreated his ambassador, in consequence of the seizure of the ships.

⁴ As this expression, "the conquest of the realm," coming from Scottish nobles, against their country, may seem unnaturally strong, it is right to observe that the words are not the author's but their own, as reported by the English ambassadors. Sadler, vol. i. pp. 257, 281.

ference, alleging that his life was in danger, rode amicably with him to Stirling, and soon acquired so complete a command over his pliant character, that he publicly abjured his religion in the Franciscan convent of that city, received absolution for his having wandered from the Catholic faith,¹ renounced the treaties with England, and delivered his eldest son to the cardinal as a pledge of his sincerity. Such was the conclusion of this remarkable coalition: its causes are of more difficult discovery, but are probably to be traced to the secret influence of the Abbot of Paisley, bastard brother of Arran, and a zealous adherent of the cardinal, who had lately arrived from France.) This able ecclesiastic is said to have secretly persuaded the governor, that, by his friendship with England, and his renunciation of the Papal supremacy, he was undermining his own title to the government, and to his paternal estates, which rested on a divorce, dependent for its validity on the maintenance of the authority of the Holy See. Arran, at no time distinguished by much penetration or resolution, took the alarm, and, believing it his only security, consented to a union with Beaton, whom he never afterwards deserted.²

Encouraged by this success, the cardinal and the governor earnestly laboured to bring over to their party the Earl of Angus and his associates. They entreated them to attend the approaching coronation of the young queen, to assist, by their presence and experience, in the parliament, and thus to restore unity to the commonwealth; but this proud and selfish potentate and his confederates only replied by sullenly retiring to Douglas castle, where they assembled their forces, and drew up a bond or covenant, by which they agreed to employ their utmost united strength in fulfilling their engagements to the English king.³ This

¹ MS. Letter in the Hamilton Papers, Lord William Parr to the Duke of Suffolk, September 13, 1543, quoted in Chalmers's Life of Mary, vol. ii. p. 404.

² Sadler, vol. i. pp. 282, 283.

³ Ibid., p. 288.

paper, as an evidence of their sincerity, they intrusted to Lord Somerville, who agreed to deliver it to Henry, and to concert measures for the extirpation of their enemies. In the meantime, the ceremony of the coronation took place at Stirling; a new council was appointed; the governor took an oath that he would administer the affairs of the kingdom by their advice; and it was resolved that a convention should be shortly held at Edinburgh, in which all disputes with England relative to the non-performance of the treaties might be calmly discussed, and, if possible, equitably adjusted.

From the temper, however, in which Henry received the intelligence of this great change in Scotland, little calmness on his side could be expected. In a paroxysm of indignation he despatched a herald into that country, denouncing war if the treaties were not immediately fulfilled.⁴ He addressed a letter to the magistrates of Edinburgh, threatening them with severe retribution should they permit the populace to offer violence to his ambassador; he commanded his warden, Sir Thomas Wharton, to liberate the chiefs of the Armstrongs, who were then his prisoners, on condition of their directing the fury of their Border war against the estates of those Scottish lords who opposed him; and he determined on the invasion of Scotland with an overwhelming force, as soon as he could muster his power, and make arrangements for its subsistence.⁵

In the late transactions the Earl of Lennox had acted a conspicuous part, and his high birth and powerful connexions were of essential service to the cardinal; but having gained the governor Beaton, with less than his usual foresight, began to look coldly on him; and Lennox, whose conduct was solely regulated by considerations of interest, deserted the cause which he had hitherto supported, and threw himself into

⁴ Credence of the English herald sent into Scotland, State-paper Office, September 1543.

⁵ Duke of Suffolk to Lord Parr, Darnton, September 10, 1543; and same to same, September 11, 1543, State-paper Office.

the arms of England.¹ This defection was attended with serious results. To Lennox had hitherto been committed the negotiations with France, and, in consequence of his advice, a French ambassador, the Sieur de la Brosse, was despatched to Scotland, accompanied by a small fleet, bearing military stores, fifty pieces of artillery, and ten thousand crowns,² to be distributed amongst the friends of the cardinal. Ignorant of the sudden change in the politics of the Scottish earl, the squadron anchored off Dumbarton, the town and fortress of which were entirely in his power; and Lennox, hurrying thither with Glencairn, one of the ablest and least scrupulous partisans of Henry, received the gold, secured it in the castle, and left the ambassador to find out his mistake when it was irremediable.

But, although mortified by this untoward event, the arrival of the French fleet brought fresh hope and renewed strength to the cardinal and the queen-dowager. Along with La Brosse came a papal legate, Grimani, patriarch of Aquileia, commissioned to take cognisance of the heretical opinions which had infected the Scottish Church, and to confirm the governor in his adherence to the Catholic religion. He remained during the winter in Scotland, entertained by the court and the nobles with much hospitality and barbaric pomp; and in the spring he returned to the Continent, bearing with him a favourable impression of this remote kingdom. Another object of the patriarch was, to advise the renewal of the league with France; nor could any measure be more agreeable to the body of the people. They were aware of the determination of Henry to invade and attempt the conquest of the country; they were incensed to the highest degree by the detention of their ships; the rekindling of the war upon the Borders had recalled all their martial propensities; and Sadler, soon after the arrival of the French fleet, informed his royal master, that such had been the effect of the promises

and pensions of the ambassador, who had been received with great distinction at court, that the whole realm was entirely in the French interest. According to the representations of this able minister, the people of Scotland could not conceal from themselves that France required nothing but friendship, and had always assisted them at their utmost need, in their efforts to maintain the honour and liberty of the country; whilst England sought to bring them into subjection, and asserted a superiority, which, he added, from their heart they so universally detested and abhorred, that unless by open force, it was vain to look for their consent.³

To this last fatal appeal matters appeared to be now rapidly approaching. Henry, irritated by the defeat of his favourite schemes, rose in his unreasonable demands in proportion to the opposition he experienced. Denouncing vengeance against the devoted country, he informed Angus and his faction, that the time was past when he was willing to accept the treaties, and that nothing now would satisfy him but the possession of the person of the young queen, the seizure of his arch-enemy the cardinal, the removal of the governor, and the delivery into his hands of the principal fortresses of the kingdom. His wisest councillors, however, dissuaded him from immediate invasion; to the cardinal and the governor, some time was also required for the assembling of their forces; and thus an interval of brief and insincere negotiation preceded the breaking out of hostilities.

It was at this time that Sadler, the ambassador, was instructed to propose to the Scottish merchants, whose ships had been unjustly detained, the restitution of their property, under the condition that they would assist the English monarch in the execution of his projects against the independence of their country. These brave and honest men, however, spurned at the proposal, with which they declared themselves greatly offended, affirming that they would not only lose their

¹ Sadler, vol. i. p. 299.

² Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 28.

³ Sadler, vol. i. p. 326. October 30, 1543.

goods and ships without farther suit or petition, but would willingly forfeit their lives, rather than agree to a condition which would make them traitors to their native land : a memorable contrast to the late conduct of the nobility, and a proof that the spirit of national independence, which, in Scotland, had long been a stranger to many of the proudest in the aristocracy, still resided in healthy vigour in the untainted bosoms of the commons.¹

Where such principles animated the body of the people, it was no easy matter for Henry to succeed ; and the exasperation of the nation was increased by the seizure of the Lords Somerville and Maxwell, the principal agents of Angus in conducting his intrigues with England. Upon the person of Somerville was found the bond signed at Douglas, along with letters which disclosed the plans of the party; and as it was evident they were ready to assist Henry in the entire subjugation of the country, their opponents abandoned all measures of conciliation, and resolved to proceed with the utmost severity against the Douglases and their party. Maxwell and Somerville were imprisoned ; the governor and the cardinal determined to assemble a parliament early in December ; and, as the intercepted packet contained ample evidence of treason, it was agreed that its first business should be the impeachment and forfeiture of Angus and his adherents. Alarmed at such a design, these barons assembled their forces, with the idea that they would be strong enough to bring about a revolution before the meeting of the estates ; but in this they were disappointed. The governor, acting by the advice of Beaton, at once resolved on war, seized Dalkeith and Pinkie, two of the chief houses of the Douglases, and sent a herald to Tantallon, where Sadler had taken refuge, commanding Angus to dismiss from his castle one whom they could no longer regard as the ambassador of England, considering his false practices with the nobility in this time of war.²

Meanwhile the parliament assembled, to which the full attendance of the three Estates, the presence of the papal legate, and the grave and weighty subjects to be debated, gave unusual solemnity. The first step taken by the cardinal convinced all that the day of weak and vacillating councils was past. A summons of treason was prepared against the Earl of Angus, and those of his party who had signed the bond in Douglas castle ; and the treaties of peace and marriage lately concluded with Henry the Eighth, were declared at an end, in consequence of the unjust conduct of the English monarch in seizing the Scottish ships,³ and refusing to ratify the peace, although it had been confirmed by the oath and seal of the regent of the kingdom. The French ambassadors, De la Brosse and Menaige, were then introduced, and delivered the message of their royal master : they represented Francis as anxious for the renewal of the alliance between the two countries, and declared he had empowered them to tender his immediate assistance in the defence of the liberty of the realm and its youthful queen, against the unwarranted designs of England. This offer was enthusiastically accepted ; the cardinal and a select council were directed to revise and renew the treaties which had so long united the realms of France and Scotland ; Secretary Panter, and Campbell of Lundy, proceeded on a mission to the French court ; and a kinsman of the regent was despatched to solicit the assistance of Denmark. Envoys at the same time were sent to the court of the emperor and the Duke of Bavaria, conveying the intelligence of the war with England, and requesting them, on this ground, to abstain from all further molestation of the Scottish commerce. Hamilton, abbot of Paisley, whose exertions had been of essential service to the government, was rewarded by the office of treasurer, from which Sir William

November 17, 1543, State-paper Office. Proclamation of Arran as governor, State-paper Office, Nov. 26, 1543.

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 30.

¹ Sadler, vol. i. p. 324.

² Letter, Earl of Arran to Earl of

Kirkaldy of Grange, a keen supporter of England, was ejected; whilst the cardinal was promoted to the dignity of chancellor, in the room of Dunbar, archbishop of Glasgow.¹

During the period that Arran the governor professed the reformed opinions, and maintained in his family the two friars, Williams and Rough, many who had before embraced their doctrines in secret were encouraged to declare openly their animosity to the Church of Rome, and the necessity of a thorough reformation; the study of the Holy Scriptures had been authorised by the parliament; books which treated of true as distinguished from corrupt religion were imported from England, and, although little relished by the nobility, as we learn from Sadler, were, in all probability, highly welcome to the middle and lower classes of the people. By such methods the seeds of reformation were very generally disseminated throughout the country. Sixteen years had now elapsed since the cruel burning of Hamilton; but the courage with which Russel and Kennedy had defended their principles at the stake, was still fresh in the recollection of the people; and although inimical to the designs of Glencairn, Somerville, Maxwell, and the Protestant lords, for the subjection of the country under the dominion of England, they were disposed to listen with a favourable ear to their denunciations of the corruptions of the Church.

Arran, however, in renouncing the ties which had bound him to Henry, had, as we have seen, at the same time abjured his former convictions, and being again received into the bosom of the Church, was induced by Beaton to renew the persecution of the reformers. In the parliament which annulled the treaties with England, an act was passed, declaring that complaints were daily made to the governor against the heretics, who began more and more to multiply in the realm, disseminating opinions contrary to the true faith; and all prelates were enjoined to make inquiry within their

dioceses for such persons, and to proceed against them according to the laws of holy Church. The expectation, however, of an immediate invasion by England protracted, for a short season, the execution of this cruel decree; and the dissensions which followed between the governor and the Douglases, the leaders of the English or Protestant party, gave a breathing time to the sincere disciples of the Reformation.

Into any minute detail of those intrigues which occupied the interval between the meeting of parliament and the commencement of the war, it would be tedious to enter. The picture which they present of the meanness and dishonesty of the English party, who have reaped in the pages of some of our historians so high a meed of praise, as the advocates of the Protestant doctrines, is very striking. To escape the sentence of forfeiture to which their repeated treasons had exposed them, the Earls of Lennox, Angus, Cassillis, and Glencairn, who had lately bound themselves by a written covenant to the service of the King of England, did not hesitate to transmit to Arran a similar bond or agreement, conceived in equally solemn terms, by which they stipulated for "themselves and all others their complices and partakers, to remain true, faithful, and obedient servants to their sovereign lady and her authority, to assist the lord governor for defence of the realm against their old enemies of England, to support the liberties of holy Church, and to maintain the true Christian faith."² To this treaty with the governor, Angus gave in his adherence on the 13th of January, and to their faithful performance of its conditions, his brother, Sir George Douglas, and Glencairn's eldest son, the Master of Kilmaurs, surrendered themselves as pledges; yet two months did not expire before we find Angus once more addressing a letter to Henry,

² Agreements (January 13 and 14, 1543-4) entered into by the Earls of Cassillis, Angus, Lennox, and Glencairn, with the Earl of Arran, governor of Scotland. MS. copy, State-paper Office.

assuring him of his inviolable fidelity, whilst, at the same time, the nobles, who had so lately bound themselves to Arran and the cardinal, despatched a messenger to court, with an earnest request that the English monarch would accelerate his preparations for the invasion of the country, transmitting minute instructions regarding the conduct of the enterprise.¹ A main army, they advised, should proceed by land; a strong fleet, with an additional force on board, was to be despatched by sea; whilst it would be of service, it was observed, to send ten or twelve ships to the west sea, to produce a diversion in the Earl of Argyle's country,—an advice in which we may probably detect the selfish policy of Glencairn, his rival, and personal enemy. A stratagem of the same kind had already been attended with success, when, at the suggestion of the same baron, the Highland chiefs shut up in the castles of Edinburgh and Dunbar were let loose by the governor Arran, under the condition that they would direct their fury against the country of Argyle.² Henry, with much earnestness, was urged to attempt this before the expected aid could arrive from France; and we shall soon perceive that, on some points, their instructions were faithfully followed.³

¹ Letter, Angus to Henry, 5th of March 1543-4, State-paper Office. Also Earl of Hertford to the king, March 8, 1543-4, State-paper Office.

² Sadler, vol. i. pp. 267-275. Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 450.

³ The above particulars, which are new to this obscure portion of our history, are derived from authentic letters preserved in the State-paper Office. In one of these, from the Earl of Hertford to the king, dated March 8, 1543-4, is this passage: "The cheif cause of his [the messenger spoken of in the text] repayn nowe to your majesty is, to accelerate your royal army and power into Scotland, which all your majesties friends there do specially desire." The letter proceeds to state, that those noblemen, who were the king's friends, directed Henry "to send a mayne armey by land, and a convenyant armey by sea, to repayre to Leith, and bring victuals for the land armey, and to send ten or twelve ships into the west sey to do some annoynce to the Erle of Argyle." Also Letter, March 5, 1543-4, Erle of Angus to Henry the Eighth, State-paper Office.

In the meantime, all things succeeding to his wishes in the civil affairs of the government, Beaton found leisure to make an ecclesiastical progress to Perth, where the reformed opinions were openly professed by some of the citizens, and on his arrival, he commenced his proceedings with a ferocity of persecution, which ultimately defeated its object. Four men, Lamb, Anderson, Ranald, and Hunter, were convicted of heresy, on the information of Spence, a friar. The crime of Lamb was his interrupting this ecclesiastic during a sermon, and his denying that prayer to the saints was a necessary means of salvation; his three associates were accused of treating with ignominious ridicule an image of St Francis, and of breaking their fast during Lent. A poor woman, also, the wife of one of these sufferers, was dragged before the inquisitorial tribunal on a charge, that, during her labour, she had refused to pray to the Virgin, declaring she would direct her prayers to God alone, in the name of Christ; and, notwithstanding the utmost intercession made to spare their lives, all suffered death. The men were hanged; and much impression was made on the people by the last words of Lamb, who, in strong language warned them against the abominations of Popery, and its voluptuous supporters—a denunciation to which the well-known profligacy of the cardinal gave no little force; yet the chief sympathy was excited by the fate of the unfortunate woman. She entreated, as a last request, to be allowed to die with her husband; but this was denied, and, according to a savage distinction in the executions of these times, she was condemned to be drowned. "It matters not, dear partner," said she, "we have lived together many happy days, but this ought to be the most joyful of them all, when we are about to have joy for ever; therefore I will not bid you good night, for ere the night shall close we shall be united in the kingdom of heaven." She then gave the little infant, who still hung upon her breast, to the attendants, held out her

hands to be bound by the executioners, saw without any change of countenance her feet secured in the same manner, and was cast into a deep pool of water, where her sufferings were ended in a moment. Such atrocious and short-sighted cruelty only strengthened the convictions which they were intended to extinguish.¹

Henry was now busy with the organisation of his projected invasion. It was the advice of the Earl of Hertford that the army should first make themselves masters of Leith, and fortifying that seaport, proceed to ravage the country and burn the capital, whilst the fleet kept possession of the Forth, and co-operated in the destruction of the coast and shipping; but, fortunately for the Scots, a more rapid, though less fatal, mode of operations was chosen by the privy council.²

In the interval of preparation, the monarch, whose passions were now excited to the utmost pitch against the cardinal, to whom he justly ascribed the total failure of his schemes, lent himself to a conspiracy, the object of which was the apprehension or assassination of his powerful enemy. The history of this plot presents an extraordinary picture of the times, and demands more than common attention. On the 17th of April, Crichton, laird of Brunston,³ who, since the coalition between Beaton and the governor, had been employed by Sadler the ambassador as a spy upon their movements, despatched to the Earl of Hertford, then at Newcastle, a Scottish gentleman named Wishart, who communicated to Hertford the particulars of the intended plot. He stated that Kirkaldy the laird of Grange, the Master of Rothes, eldest son to the earl of that name, and John Charteris, were willing to apprehend or slay the cardinal, if assured of proper support from England. Wishart, who brought this offer, was instantly despatched by post to the English court; and, in a personal interview with the king, informed

him of the services which Kirkaldy and Rothes were ready to perform. Henry received the letters of Brunston, and listened to the report of his messenger with much satisfaction, approved of the plot, and, in the event of its being successful, promised the conspirators his royal protection, should they be constrained to take refuge in his dominions.⁴ But Beaton had either received secret information of the project for his destruction, or the design was, for the present, interrupted by some unforeseen occurrence. Succeeding events, however, demonstrated that it was delayed only, not abandoned, and that the same unscrupulous agents who now intrigued with the English monarch were at last induced by Henry to accomplish their atrocious purpose.

It was now the end of April, and having concentrated his naval and military power, the English king at last let loose his vengeance on the devoted country. On the 1st of May, a fleet of two hundred sail, under the command of Lord Lisle, high-admiral of England, appeared in the Firth, and the citizens, after anxiously gazing for a short time at the unusual spectacle, on a nearer inspection found their worst fears realised, by discovering the royal flag of England streaming from the mast head of the admiral. For such a surprisal it seems extraordinary that the governor was unprepared, although Henry's intentions must have been well known. A very inferior force might have successfully attacked the English in their disembarkation, but the opportunity was lost; four days were allowed Hertford, who landed his army and his artillery at his leisure; and it was not till he was advancing from Granton craig to Leith, that Arran and the cardinal, at the head of a force hastily levied, and consisting chiefly of their personal adherents, threw themselves between the enemy and this place as

¹ Spottiswood's History, p. 75.

² See Illustrations, letter A.

³ The house of Brunston was situated on the Esk, near Musselburgh.

⁴ Letter, Orig. Earl of Hertford and Council of the North to the king—in possession of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton: the original draft, with many corrections, is in the State-paper Office. See Remarks on the Assassination of Cardinal Beaton, Illustrations, letter B.

if they meant to dispute the passage. They were immediately repulsed, however, by the superior force of Hertford, and Leith was given up to the plunder of the army without a struggle. Although deserted by the governor, the inhabitants of Edinburgh flew to arms, and mustering under the command of Otterburn of Reidhall, the provost of the city, barricaded the gates, and determined to defend themselves. Otterburn, however, was first despatched to the English camp, and, in an interview with Hertford, remonstrated against such unlooked-for hostilities, and proposed an amicable adjustment of all differences. It was answered by the English earl, that he came as a soldier, not an ambassador; that his commission commanded him to ravage the country with fire and sword; nor could he withdraw his army under any other condition than the delivery of the young queen into the hands of his master. Such a message was received with much indignation by the citizens. They declared they would rather submit to the last extremities than purchase safety by so ignominious a course, and prepared to sustain the onset of the enemy, when they were deserted by their chief magistrate, who either dreaded so unequal a contest, or had been brought over to the English party.¹ Upon this they retreated into the city, chose a new provost, completed their temporary ramparts, and for a while not only sustained the assault of Hertford, but ultimately compelled him to retire to Leith for the purpose of bringing up his battering ordnance. But a contest so unequal could not last. Arran, Huntly, Argyle, and the cardinal had retreated to Linlithgow; and to have attempted to defend the gates against the heavy ordnance, without hopes of assistance, would have been folly. During the night, therefore, the citizens, removing with them all their transportable wealth, silently abandoned the town; but

¹ *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 31. Otterburn had been long a secret tamperer with England in the minority of James the Fifth, and during the reign of that monarch.

Hamilton of Stenhouse resolutely defended the castle, and Hertford, after an unavailing attempt to construct a battery, which was dismounted by the superior fire of the garrison, was compelled to raise the siege, and content himself by giving the city to the flames. Its conflagration lasted for three days; and the English army, having been reinforced by four thousand Border horse under Lord Eure, employed themselves in ravaging and plundering the adjacent country with an unsparing cruelty, which they knew would be acceptable to their master the king, and which was not soon forgotten by the inhabitants.

It was now the 15th of May, and the governor having assembled an army, and liberated the Earl of Angus and his brother, George Douglas, in the hope that all party differences might be forgotten² in a determination to repel the common enemy, was rapidly advancing to give them battle, when Lord Lisle, setting fire to Leith, re-embarked a portion of the army, and instantly set sail, leaving the remainder of the host to return by land under Hertford. Before weighing anchor, the English admiral seized two large Scottish ships, the Salamander and the Unicorn, and destroyed by fire all the smaller craft which lay in the harbour; nor did he omit to plunder of its maritime wealth every creek or harbour which lay within reach, as he sailed along the coast. The land army was equally remorseless in its retreat. Seton, Haddington, Dunbar, and Renton were successively given to the flames; and thus ended an expedition as cruel as it was impolitic, which only increased in the Scots the virulence of the national antipathy, and rendered more distant any prospect of a cordial union between the two kingdoms.

Henry, as it is well observed by Lord Herbert, had done too much for a suitor, and too little for a conqueror.

² So innate was George Douglas's disposition to intrigue, that soon after his liberation he had a private interview in Leith with the Earl of Hertford, and gave him advice concerning the conduct of the expedition. *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, vol. ii p. 451.

In the violence of his resentment he had given orders that no protection should be afforded to the estates even of his Scottish friends, and the lands of the Douglases were wasted as mercilessly as those of their enemies. The effects of this short-sighted policy were soon seen in the splitting of that Anglo-Scottish party, which had so long supported the interests of the English monarch. Angus, George Douglas, and their numerous and powerful adherents, joined the cardinal, and the only friends left to England were the Earls of Lennox and Glencairn; the first, a small acquisition, a man of weak, selfish, and versatile character; but the other, one of the ablest and most powerful barons in Scotland, whose son, the Master of Kilmaurs, from his spirit and military experience, was well fitted to execute the plans which the judgment of the father had matured. Such, indeed, was the great power and influence of Glencairn in the west of Scotland, that, in the event of a former invasion contemplated by Henry in 1543, he undertook to convey his army from Carlisle to Glasgow, without stroke or challenge;¹ and so faithful had he remained to these principles, that only a few days after the retreat of Hertford, we find him engaged in a negotiation which, considering the cruel ravages then inflicted by the English army, reflects little credit on his love of country. On the 17th of May, at Carlisle, an agreement was concluded between Glencairn, Lennox, and Henry the Eighth, by which that monarch consented to settle an ample pension on the former, and his son the Master of Kilmaurs, whilst to Lennox a more splendid reward was promised in the government of Scotland, and the hand of Lady Margaret Douglas, his niece. Upon their side, the Scottish barons acknowledged Henry as "protector of the realm of Scotland,"—a title which, considering his late invasion, almost sounds ironical; and they engaged to use their utmost efforts to become masters of the person of the young queen, and deliver

¹ Sadler, vol. i. p. 156.

her into his hands, along with the principal fortresses in the country. Lennox agreed to the surrender of Dumbarton, with the isle and castle of Bute. In conclusion, both earls stipulated that they would serve the English monarch against France, and all nations and persons, for such wages as his other subjects, no reservation being added of their allegiance to their natural prince, which, by the treaty, they virtually renounced.² In this base agreement one redeeming article was included, by which Glencairn and Lennox undertook to cause the word of God to be truly taught in their territories. The Bible is described by them as the only foundation from which all truth and honour proceedeth; but it appears not to have suggested itself to these Scottish barons, that the seizure of their lawful sovereign, and the betrayal of the liberty of their country, were scarcely reconcilable with the sacred standard to which they appealed.

From Carlisle, where he had concluded the negotiation, Glencairn hurried to his own country to assemble his vassals, whilst Lennox collected his strength at Dumbarton; but, as if to punish their desertion of their country, everything went against them. Arran, whose measures, now directed by the cardinal, were marked by unusual promptitude, lost not a moment in marching against them at the head of a thousand men, and advancing to Glasgow, was boldly confronted by Glencairn, with five hundred spearmen, on a wide common beside the city. The parties engaged under feelings of unusual obstinacy, and in the battle the unrelenting features of civil strife appeared with all their native ferocity; but Glencairn was at last defeated with great slaughter, his second son being slain, with many others of his party, while the rest were dispersed or made prisoners.³ The governor immediately occupied the city, which he gave up to plunder, the chief magistrate having sided with

² Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. xv. pp. 23-26, inclusive; and pp. 29-32.

³ *Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 32.

his adversary. Glencairn fled almost alone to Dumbarton, and Lennox, having delivered the castle into his hands, instantly took ship for England, where he was soon after united to the Lady Margaret Douglas. His favourable reception at the English court, and his unnatural conduct to his country, were fatal to his illustrious brother, the Lord Aubigny, in France, whom Francis the First, suspecting his fidelity, apparently on no good grounds, deprived of his high offices, and threw into prison.

Henry's affairs in Scotland, so far as they depended on the faction which had hitherto supported him, appeared at this crisis to be desperate; and a general council being summoned to meet at Stirling on the 3d of June,¹ it was attended by the whole body of the nobility, with the exception of Lennox and Glencairn. A favourable opportunity was now afforded for the union of all parties in support of the independence of the realm. The insincerity of Henry's professions was demonstrated by the cruel ravages with which his late invasion had been accompanied; a feeling of deep indignation had arisen in the breasts of many of his former adherents; and all classes recoiled from a union which they were called upon to celebrate amid the flames of their capital and the murder of its citizens. But it was the misfortune of the Scottish aristocracy, that when immediate danger was past, it was perpetually disunited by the spirit of selfishness and ambition. Of the nobles, a large majority had become disgusted with the weakness and vacillation of the government of Arran; and they now proposed that the regency should be conferred on the queen-mother, from whose energy they anticipated a happier result, and more determined measures against England.² It is probable that the

Earl of Angus and his brother were chiefly implicated in this new movement, which is unknown to our general historians, and involved in much obscurity. It is certain, however, that a coalition took place between the Catholic and Protestant parties; that, in a convention, they declared the governor deprived of his authority, proclaimed the queen-dowager regent in his stead, appointed a new privy-council, and conferred upon the Earl of Angus the office of lieutenant-general of the kingdom.

This state of things could not long continue, and only brought increasing troubles to the country, which continued to be distracted by intestine dissensions and foreign war. Arran, still supported by the cardinal and a small party of the nobility, persevered in exercising his authority as governor, and the queen-dowager began to dread that all her endeavours would prove insufficient to keep her partisans together. In the Highlands and Isles the presence of Huntly and Argyle was required to repress a rebellion of the clans, encouraged, in all probability, by the intrigues of England, which frequently adopted this policy to weaken her enemy. The disturbance was speedily repressed, yet not without much bloodshed being mixed up with those private feuds which prevailed in these savage districts. In a ferocious contest at Inverlochy, between the Frasers, led by the Lord Lovat and his son, with a more numerous body of the Macdonalds, the combatants, stripping to their shirts on account of the extreme heat of the weather, fought rather for extermination than victory; two survivors being left on one side, and four on the other.³ During these sanguinary con-

is not an original paper, but an authentic copy; transmitted, probably, by some of the spies in Henry's interest at the Scottish court. It is signed by the Earls of Angus, Bothwell, Montrose, Lord Sinclair, Robert Maxwell, Earl of Huntly, Cassillis, Marshal, Lord Somerville, George Douglas, Earl of Moray, Argyle, Errol, Lords Erskine, St John, Malcolm, lord chamberlain, Hew, lord Lovat, and Sir John Campbell of Cawdor, knight.

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 32.

² Agreement of the principal Scots nobility to support the authority of the queen-mother as Regent of Scotland, against the Earl of Arran, declared by this instrument to be deprived of his office, dated June (no day) 1544. State-paper Office, (see also Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 33.) The agreement

³ Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 34.

tests in the remote Highlands, an equally disgraceful spectacle was exhibited at Perth; where a claim for the office of provost was decided by arms, between Lord Ruthven on the one side, supported by a numerous train of his vassals, and Lord Gray, with Norman Lesley, master of Rothes, and Charteris of Kinfauns, on the other. During his late ecclesiastical progress to Perth, the cardinal, who suspected Ruthven of leaning to the reformed opinions, had deprived him of his office of provost, and directed the citizens to elect Charteris: a crafty device, as was believed, to sow dissension between his rivals in power, it being notorious that the Lords Gray and Ruthven, with the Earl of Rothes and his adherents, had been hitherto unanimous in their opposition to Beaton. Nor was he unsuccessful: Ruthven, supported by the townsmen and merchants, in those days trained to arms, resented the affront, and held his place by force, whilst Charteris, reinforced by Gray, Glamis, and Norman Lesley, broke into the town; and both parties meeting on the narrow bridge over the Tay, fought with sanguinary obstinacy till the victory declared for Ruthven; sixty of his opponents being left dead on the pavement, and the rest compelled to fly from the city.¹

It was now time for the Earl of Lennox to perform his engagements to Henry; and having sailed from Bristol with a squadron of ten ships, and a small force of hagbutteers, archers, and pikemen, he arrived on the coast of Scotland, attacked and plundered the isle of Arran, and sailing to Bute, occupied the island and its castle of Rothesay with little difficulty. These acquisitions, according to agreement, were delivered to Sir Rise Mansell and Richard Broke, who accompanied the expedition, and took formal possession of them in behalf of the King of England.² He next

directed his course to Dumbarton castle, a fortress of which, as the key of the west of Scotland, Henry had long, but in vain, sought the possession. It was the property of Lennox, and being commanded by Stirling of Glorat, one of his retainers, to whom he had intrusted it on his departure for England, he did not doubt for a moment that it would be surrendered. In this, however, he was disappointed: Stirling received and recognised him as his master, but the brave baron did not forget his higher allegiance to his sovereign. The first mention of his giving up the castle to Henry was received with a burst of generous indignation; the garrison taking the alarm, rose in arms; and Lennox, with his English friends, becoming alarmed for their safety, were glad to make a precipitate retreat to their ships.

In the meantime the Earl of Argyle, with a considerable force, had occupied Dunoon, a strong castle situated on the narrow strait between Argyle and Renfrew, whilst George Douglas, with four thousand men, had entered Dumbarton. The squadron therefore deemed it prudent to fall down the Clyde; and being fired on in passing Dunoon, Lennox, in the chivalrous spirit of the times, accepted the defiance, and landing under cover of a fire from his own ships, attacked the Highlanders, whom he dispersed with considerable slaughter. He next invaded Cantire, plundered the adjacent coasts of Kyle and Carrick, and returning to Bristol, despatched Sir Peter Mewtas to inform King Henry, then at Boulogne, of the termination of an expedition which had failed in its principal purpose—the seizure of Dumbarton; and only rendered more distant the prospect of peace between the countries.³ Much indignation was expressed by Lennox and the English ministers against the Earl of Glencairn and his son, the Master of Kil-

then going by land to Beaumaris, to join his ship, which had sailed the day before, and intended to proceed with all diligence on his expedition.

³ We know from the *Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 35, that Lennox arrived at Dumbarton on the 10th of August.

¹ *Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 34.

² Instructions to Sir Rise Mansell and Richard Broke. State-paper Office, August 1544. In the same repository is a Letter from Lennox to the Privy-Council, dated West Chester, 8th of August 1544. He was

maurs, whose services had been so lately purchased, and so soon withdrawn. Wriothesley, the chancellor, inveighed against "the old fox and his cub," who had imposed on the simplicity of Lennox; and although both the father and son had written to excuse their proceedings, their falsehood was considered apparent, and their apology little regarded.¹

During the continuance of this expedition, Sir Ralph Eure, Sir Brian Layton, and Sir Richard Bowes ravaged the Scottish Borders with merciless barbarity, and organising a system of rapine and devastation against those districts where the Scots were most defenceless, reduced the country almost to a desert.² It could scarcely indeed be otherwise, considering the perseverance of the Border inroads, and the distracted state of public affairs produced by the continued dissensions between the parties of the governor and the queen-dowager. Men neither knew whom to obey, nor where to look for protection. In the beginning of November the regent held a parliament, in which Angus and his brother were charged with treason, and all the heavy feudal penalties of banishment and forfeiture threatened to be enforced against them. On the 13th of the same month the three estates assembled at Stirling in obedience to the summons of the queen, who at the same time issued a proclamation discharging all classes of the people from their allegiance to the pretended regent.³ In

¹ State-papers of Henry the Eighth, published by Government, p. 769.

² Of these inroads, a brief contemporary abstract has been preserved in Haynes's State-papers, (pp. 43-55 inclusive,) a bloody ledger, as it has been rightly denominated, which, with all the formality of a business account, contains the successive inroads, burnings, and spoliations from July till November. By this it appears that of towns, by which we must understand small villages, towers, farm offices, parish churches, and fortified dwelling-houses, were burnt 192; and that the plunder amounted, in cattle, to 10,386; in sheep, to 12,492; in nags, geldings, and foals, to 1496; whilst the small number of those slain or made prisoners, evinces the little resistance encountered, and the defenceless state of the country.

³ Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 36;

this state of things, the talents of the cardinal were again employed in negotiating an agreement between the rival factions, which, although insincere, had a brief success. Peace seemed to be restored, and Arran, eager to avenge the late outrages, advanced at the head of seven thousand men to the Borders, and laid siege to Coldingham, then held by the enemy. But scarce had they planted their artillery, when their proceedings became again weakened by suspicion and treason. It was discovered that the Douglases continued their correspondence with England; the inferior leaders, dreading the result, began to disperse in disorder; the governor became alarmed for his personal safety, and two thousand English defeated and chased off the field a Scottish army more than triple their number. In this disgraceful rout, Angus, who had the conduct of the vanguard with Glencairn, Cassillis, Lord Somerville, and the sheriff of Ayr, opposed no resistance to the enemy; whilst Bothwell, who brought up the rear, in vain attempted to rally, and was at last compelled to join in the flight.⁴

The failure of this last expedition was wholly to be ascribed to the intrigues of the Douglases, who, with their associates, Glencairn and Cassillis, were now playing a desperate game. A sentence of treason hung over their heads in Scotland; in England; Henry regarded their conduct with so much suspicion, that in the late expedition of Hertford no protection had been granted to their estates and vassals. They were now, therefore, in a position as precarious as it was discreditable; likely to lose the confidence of both governments; exposed to the chance of banishment from their own country, and to be cut

corroborated in its dates by the Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 445-447. It is worthy of notice that these rival parliaments, which are new to Scottish history, are alone mentioned in the Diurnal of Occurrents.

⁴ The cannon, however, were carried off, as is asserted, by the exertions of the Douglases. Their general conduct in the expedition renders the fact extremely doubtful.

off from a retreat into England. Under these circumstances they adopted that middle course which is not uncommon to men long engaged in political intrigue; and, more studious for the possession of power, than the preservation of character, they determined to break wholly with neither party. George Douglas, brother of Angus, a man of great ability, and little scrupulous as to means, continued his correspondence with the English king, and betrayed to him the secrets of the government. Angus, on the other hand, deceived Arran and the queen-dowager into the belief that they had completely repented of their former tergiversation, and convinced of the injustice of Henry's demands, were prepared cordially to co-operate in the defence of the country.¹

By this pretended coalition they gained an important end. In a parliament held at Edinburgh in the beginning of December, which was attended by the whole body of the nobility, the earl and his brother, Sir George, being personally present, were absolved from the charge of treason, and declared innocent of the crimes which had been alleged against them. Glencairn, Cassillis, and Sir Hugh Campbell, sheriff of Ayr, obtained at the same time a remission for all treasons committed by them, in return for the good service done, or to be done, to the realm, although it does not clearly appear what services could be meant.² An attempt was made to raise, by a land tax, a sum of money for the support of a thousand horsemen, to be placed for the defence of the Borders under the Earl of Angus, which completely failed. The barons of Lothian declined either to pay the money, or to serve under a leader

¹ Our general historians, Buchanan, Lesley, and Maitland, not aware of the double part acted by the Douglases, have represented this coalition as sincere. Not so, however, the *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 38, which gives the only accurate account of the siege of Coldingham and the dispersion of the army. As to Buchanan, his narrative on this part of our history is so completely at variance with the truth, that it is little else than a classical romance.

² *Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 36

whose honesty they doubted; and so universal was the suspicion of the treachery of the Douglases, that when the regent repaired to Lauder, and issued his command for the immediate muster of the whole force of the realm, the country, throughout its various districts, refused to rise in arms. The commons dreaded a repetition of the flight from Coldingham, and the barons adopted the expedient of entering into covenants with each other for their mutual defence against the continued inroads of the English.³

Of all this the effects were deplorable. During the contest for the regency, the Border barons, whose duty it was to defend these districts, remained inactive; many Border clans, at all times somewhat precarious in their allegiance, entered into the service of England, and assumed the red cross as a badge of their desertion; others were compelled to purchase protection; whilst the English wardens insulted over the country, and became so confident in their superiority, that they contemplated its entire conquest even to the Forth as a matter of no difficult attainment.

With these proud hopes, Sir Ralph Eure and Sir Brian Layton repaired to court; and in an interview with the king, explained to him a scheme for this purpose, which, as a means of punishing the alleged perfidy of the Scots, met with his entire approval. As a reward for the uninterrupted success with which their various inroads had been attended, Eure obtained, it is said, a royal grant of all the country he should conquer in the Merse, Teviotdale, and Lauderdale, districts of which a great part formed the hereditary property of the Earls of Douglas. The insolence of so premature an appropriation of his paternal estates incensed Angus far more than the indignity offered to his country; and he is said to have sworn a great oath, that if Ralph Eure dared to act upon the grant, he would write his sasine, or instrument of possession, on his skin with sharp pens and bloody ink. The English baron, however,

³ *Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 37.

was not of a temper to be deterred by threats, and soon after repaired to the Borders with a force of five thousand men, consisting of foreign mercenaries, English archers, and a body of six hundred Border Scots, who wore the red cross above their armour. With these they had recommended their inroads, in which they even exceeded their former barbarity. They burnt the tower of Broomhouse, and in it its lady, a noble and aged matron, with her whole family. They penetrated to Melrose, which they left completely spoiled and in ruins, not sparing its venerable abbey, the burial-place of the Earls of Douglas, whose tombs they ransacked and defaced with wanton sacrilege.

Deeply enraged at this new insult, Angus collected his vassals, and joining the governor, advanced to Melrose; but they were surprised by a sudden attack of the English, and driven from their position with considerable slaughter. The cause of this new disaster is ascribed by an ancient chronicle, apparently a contemporary document, to the secret information furnished to the enemy by George Douglas; and it is certain that he was then in communication both with Sir Ralph Eure and his royal master; but the sincerity of his brother the earl upon this occasion is not to be doubted. He acted in the true spirit of a feudal baron. The love of revenge, the desire to retaliate the insult offered to his house, burned inextinguishably strong in a bosom which, for many years, had been a stranger to the love of his country; and Douglas, true only to himself, appeared for the moment to be true to Scotland. With these bitter feelings he saw the English once more plunder Melrose, and commence their retreat to Jedburgh; whilst he and Arran with a far inferior force, could only hang upon their rear and watch their motions.

On reaching the Teviot, Eure, confident in his superior strength, which was more than five to one, encamped on a level moor or common above the village of Ancrum; whilst the Scots fell back to a neighbouring eminence,

and hesitated whether, with so great a disparity, they should risk a battle. At this moment they were joined by Norman Lesley, master of Rothes, at the head of twelve hundred lances; and soon after, Walter Scott, the veteran Laird of Buccleuch, came up at full speed, with the news that his followers were within an hour's march.¹ It was resolved, with these reinforcements, to give battle to the enemy, who, during all this time, eagerly watched their motions; but, by the advice of Buccleuch, Arran abandoned the height which he occupied, and drew up in a level plain behind it, named Peniel Heugh, where they were entirely concealed from the English. They then dismounted and sent the horses with the camp boys to an eminence beyond the plain. These dispositions were intended to betray the English into the idea that the Scottish army was in flight; and they succeeded. Rendered careless and confident by their long career of success, and anticipating a repetition of the combat at Coldingham, Sir Brian Layton and Sir Robert Bowes pushed on with the advance; whilst Sir Ralph Eure followed at full speed with the main battle, consisting of a thousand spears, with an equal number of archers and hagbutteers on each wing. The rapidity of their movement necessarily threw their ranks into some disorder; the horses were blown by their gallop up the hill; the infantry were breathless from eagerness to arrive on the same ground with their companions; and in this state, having surmounted the eminence, they discovered, to their astonishment, instead of an enemy in flight, the compact serried phalanx of the Scots within a short distance of their own army. At this moment a heron, disturbed by the troops, sprang from the adjacent marsh, and soared away over the heads of the combatants. "Oh!" said Angus, "that I had here my white goss-hawk: we should then all 'yoke'² at once." To have halted, with the

¹ Maitland, vol. ii. p. 861.

² To yoke—to set to; buckling closely together.

hope of restoring order to their ranks, would have been fatal ; and Eure, relying on his superiority, charged bravely and without delay. But the advantage of infantry over cavalry, of which the main body of the English was composed, never more strikingly evinced itself. The Scottish spears, an ell longer than the English, repulsed the van under Layton and Bowes, and pushed it back in confusion on the main battle, which, in its turn, was thrown upon the rearward. All was soon in confusion, and no efforts of their gallant leaders could prevent an entire rout. The setting sun shone full in the faces of the English ; and their enemy had also the advantage of the wind, which blew the smoke of the harquebusses upon the columns of their adversaries and blinded them. On the first symptoms of flight, the six hundred Scottish Borderers, who were in the service of Henry, throwing away their red crosses, joined their countrymen, and with the merciless spirit common to renegades, made a pitiless slaughter of their former friends. The neighbouring peasantry, who, from terror of the English, had not engaged in the battle, rose upon the flying enemy ; and such was the deep desire of vengeance produced by the late ravages, that even the women took part in the pursuit, and calling out to their husbands and relatives to "remember Broomhouse," encouraged them in the work of retribution. On the English side the loss was great, eight hundred being slain, and a thousand made prisoners ; but that which afforded most satisfaction to the enemy was the discovery, amongst the dead bodies, of Eure and Layton, the leaders who, for the last six months, had signalised themselves by such unexampled and cruel ravages. Amongst the captives were many knights and gentlemen ; and the governor, having first seized the camp equipage which was left in Melrose, advanced to Coldingham, which the enemy evacuated. He then marched to Jedburgh, and recovered from the English, not only the town, but the greater part of the Borders,

which they had lately considered a conquered territory, making proclamation that all who had been compelled to accept assurance from England, and assume the red cross, should, on returning to their allegiance, have a full indemnity.

On receiving news of this defeat, Henry expressed deep indignation against Angus, whom he accused of ingratitude, and threatened with the extremity of his resentment. Douglas's answer was characteristic :— "What," said he, "is our brother-in-law offended, because, like a good Scotsman, I have avenged upon Ralph Eure the defaced tombs of my ancestors ? They were better men than he, and I ought to have done no less ; and will he take my life for that ? Little knows King Henry the skirts of Kernetable ; I can keep myself there against all his English host."¹

By this success confidence was restored to the people, whose hearts had sunk under the unresisted ravages of the English ; whilst new strength was given to the party of the governor and the cardinal. It happened also that, at this moment, they confidently expected the support of their continental allies. Francis the First, irritated by the late invasion of Henry and the loss of Boulogne, was resolved to exert his utmost efforts against England. He had detached the emperor from his alliance with that country, and now made preparations for its invasion by a powerful fleet ; whilst he determined to send an auxiliary force into Scotland to make a diversion in that quarter.

Of such resolutions early advice was sent from France to Arran ; and the English monarch, having become acquainted with these hostile intentions by a secret despatch from George Douglas, began seriously to dread the con-

¹ Godscroft's History of the House and Race of Douglas, vol. ii. p. 123. As a biographer, Hume of Godscroft not unfrequently gives us characteristic traits, which I borrow from his pages when they bear the marks of truth. As an authentic historian, no one who has compared his rambling eulogistic story with contemporary documents, will venture to quote him.

sequences of raising so many enemies against him, and to be convinced that his conduct towards Scotland had been inconsistent and impolitic. He was assured by Douglas, that so far from gaining his object, or promoting the treaties of peace and marriage, the rigorous measures which some reported he intended to use, would drive the people to despair.¹ These remonstrances produced some effect; Henry prevailed on himself to try conciliation, and intrusted the Earl of Cassillis, one of his Solway prisoners, who had been long attached to the interests of England, with the management of the negotiation. This nobleman repaired to the English court, February 28th, 1545; and having received his instructions, returned, after a short absence, to Scotland. To prevail upon the Earls of Glencairn, Marshal, and the Douglases, who professed never to have left the allegiance to the English king, to renew their active efforts in his service, was no difficult task; and the Earl of Angus, as a proof of his sincerity, resigned his office of lieutenant under Arran; but the governor and the cardinal were more difficult to manage. Huntly, Argyle, and the queen-dowager were absent. It was necessary they should be first consulted; and a convention of the nobility was appointed to be held on the 15th of April, for the purpose of deliberating on Henry's offers, and giving his envoy a final answer. In the meantime the wardens were commanded to abstain from all hostilities; whilst, by the advice of Cassillis, the English monarch prepared his force for the invasion of the country, should matters not proceed according to his expectation. An army of thirty thousand men, under the command of the Earl of Hertford, was directed to be levied on the Borders; and Sir Ralph

Sadler, whose acquaintance with Scotland had well fitted him for the office, was appointed treasurer-at-war and political agent.²

On the 17th of April the convention was held at Edinburgh; Cassillis presented himself as the envoy of Henry, and acquainted the nobles that, if they consented to the treaties of peace and marriage, he was empowered to assure them that the king would forget what had passed, and forbear to avenge the injuries which he had received.³ It was the infirmity of this prince that, even in his efforts at conciliation, he assumed a tone of pride and superiority which defeated his object. The injuries which he had received were little in comparison with those which he had recently inflicted, and his power of avenging them was at best problematical. The influence too of the party of the governor and the cardinal was every day increasing; certain intelligence of the embarkation of the auxiliaries had been received from France; from Denmark they expected a fleet of merchantmen laden with provisions; a friendly negotiation had been opened with the emperor; and new importance had been conferred on Beaton by his receiving from Rome the dignity of legate *a latere* in Scotland.⁴ All these circumstances gave confidence to the political friends of the cardinal; whilst Henry's late invasion and subsequent inroads had created distrust and aversion, even in many of his former supporters: The consequence of this was natural—almost inevitable; the negotiation of Cassillis entirely failed; the influence of Beaton carried everything before it in the convention; the treaties of peace and marriage were declared at an end; and it was resolved cordial-

² *Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 38.

³ Letter from the Privy-Council to the Earl of Cassillis, in answer to his letter in cipher of 2d April,—communicating the king's directions, April 10, 1545. *State-paper Office*.

⁴ Letter, Lord-Lieutenant and Council of the North to the King, May 1, 1545,—stating that a Hull vessel had captured a Dutch ship laden with provisions for the Scots; and that in one of the chests was found a commission from the Pope, appointing Beaton legate *a latere* in Scotland.

¹ Original Letter, Sir George Douglas to the King, from Lauder, February 25, 1544-5. Douglas asks Henry's pardon if he had offended him, states his great losses by the last invasion of the English army, and assures him that the rigorous measures which it was reported he intended to use towards Scotland would be the means of driving the people to desperation. *State-paper Office*.

ly to embrace the assistance of France.¹ The earl instantly informed Henry of the complete defeat of his negotiation; and, in the letter which conveyed the intelligence, advised the immediate invasion of Scotland with a strong force.

Mortified to be thus repulsed, Henry's animosity against Beaton became more vehement than before. To his energy and political talent he justly ascribed his defeat; and whilst he urged his preparations for war, he encouraged the Earl of Cassillis in organising a conspiracy for his assassination. The plot is entirely unknown either to our Scottish or English historians; and now, after the lapse of nearly three centuries, has been discovered in the secret correspondence of the State-paper Office. It appears that Cassillis had addressed a letter to Sadler, in which he made an offer "for the killing of the cardinal, if his majesty would have it done, and promise when it was done, a reward." Sadler shewed the letter to the Earl of Hertford and the Council of the North, and by them it was transmitted to the king.² Cassillis's associates, to whom he had communicated his purpose, were the Earls of Angus, Glencairn, Marshal, and Sir George Douglas; and these persons requested that Forster, an English prisoner of some note, who could visit Scotland without suspicion, should be sent to Edinburgh to communicate with them on the design for cutting off Beaton. Hertford accordingly consulted the privy-council upon his majesty's wishes in

¹ Letter in cipher, with the original decipher, Cassillis to Henry the Eighth, April 20, 1545. State-paper Office.

² Privy-Council to the Earl of Hertford, dated Greenwich, May 30, 1545,—relative to the proposition of the Earl of Cassillis, for the assassination of Cardinal Beaton. MS. State-paper Office. Also, letter from the Council of the North to the King's Majesty, May 21, 1545. MS. State-paper Office. By the letter of 30th May, quoted above, it appears that the first resolution of the associated earls was to send a confidential envoy to meet and communicate with Sir Ralph Sadler at Alnwick. As to this purpose, however, they changed their mind, probably from the fear of incurring suspicion, and requested that Forster should be sent.

An interjection

this affair, requiring to be informed whether Cassillis's plan for the assassination of his powerful enemy was agreeable to the king, and whether Forster should be despatched into Scotland. Henry, conveying his wishes through the privy-council, replied that he desired Forster to set off immediately; to the other part of the query, touching the assassination of the cardinal, the answer of the privy-council was in these words:—"His majesty hath willed us to signify unto your lordship that his highness, reputing the fact not meet to be set forward expressly by his majesty, will not seem to have to do in it, and yet not misliking the offer, thinketh good that Mr Sadler, to whom that letter was addressed, should write to the earl of the receipt of his letter containing such an offer, which he thinketh not convenient to be communicated to the king's majesty. Marry, to write to him what he thinketh of the matter; he shall say that if he were in the Earl of Cassillis's place, and were as able to do his majesty good service there as he knoweth him to be, and thinketh a right good will in him to do it, he would surely do what he could for the execution of it, believing verily to do thereby not only an acceptable service to the king's majesty, but also a special benefit to the realm of Scotland, and would trust verily the king's majesty would consider his service in the same; as you doubt not of his accustomed goodness to those which serve him, but he would do the same to him."³ In this reply there was some address; Henry preserved, as he imagined, his regal dignity; and whilst he affected ignorance of the atrocious design, encouraged its execution, and shifted the whole responsibility upon his obsequious agents. On both points the king's commands were obeyed; Sadler wrote to Cassillis in the indirect manner which had been pointed out; and Forster, in compliance with the wishes of the conspirators, was sent into Scotland, and had an interview with Angus, Cassillis, and

³ Lords of the Privy-Council to Hertford, May 30, 1545. State-paper Office.

Sir George Douglas; the substance of which he has given in an interesting report which is still preserved.¹ It is evident, from this paper, that both Angus and Cassillis were deterred from committing themselves on such delicate ground as the proposed murder of the cardinal, by the cautious nature of Sadler's letter to Cassillis, who, in obedience to the royal orders, had recommended the assassination of the prelate, as if from himself; and had affirmed, though falsely, that he had not communicated the project to the king. These two earls, therefore, said not a word to the envoy on the subject; although Cassillis on his departure intrusted him with a letter in cipher for Sadler. Sir George Douglas, however, was less timorous, and sent by Forster a message to the Earl of Hertford in very explicit terms:—"He willed me," says the envoy, "to tell my lord-lieutenant, that if the king would have the cardinal dead; if his grace would promise a good reward for the doing thereof, so that the reward were known what it should be, the country being lawless as it is, he thinketh that that adventure would be proved; for he saith, the common saying is, the cardinal is the only occasion of the war, and is smally beloved in Scotland; and then, if he were dead, by that means how that reward should be paid." Such was the simple proposal of Sir George Douglas for the removal of his arch-enemy; but, although the English king had no objection to give the utmost secret encouragement to the conspiracy, he hesitated to offer such an outrage to the common feelings of Christendom, as to set a price upon the head of the cardinal, and to offer a reward and indemnity to those who should slay him. For the moment, therefore, the scheme seemed to be abandoned by the earls, but it was only to be afterwards resumed by Brunston.²

¹ The Discourse of Thomas Forster, gentleman, being sent into Scotland by my Lord-lieutenant, to speak to the Earls of Cassillis, Glencairn, Angus, Marshal, and George Douglas, being returned with the same to Darnon the 4th July 1545. MS. State-paper Office.

² In the light which it throws upon the in-

In the midst of these machinations for the removal of his enemies, and preparations for open war, important events had taken place in Scotland. Early in May a French fleet, having on board a body of three thousand intrigues of the Douglases and the state of parties in Scotland, the report of Forster is a paper of great historical value. It will be published in its entire state in the forthcoming volume of the State Papers; but an analysis of it, with a few brief extracts, may be interesting to the reader. It thus opens:—"The said Thomas Forster sayth, that according to my Lord-lieutenant's commandment, he entered Scotland at Wark, and so passed to his taker's house in Scotland, as tho he had repayed for his entree to save his lande, and declaring to his taker that he had occasion to speke with George Douglas, his taker was contented, according to the custome there, that he shuld go at his pleasure; whereupon he came to Dalkeith to George Douglas, and shewed him th' occasion of his hither comyng to speak to him and th' Erll aforesaid, with message from my Lord-lieutenant and Master Sadleyr, who willed him to go to Douglas, where he woulde cause th' Erlls of Cassillis and Anguisse to mete hym, for he said he could not get them to Dalkeith without gret suspition. And hereupon, he sayth, that going towards Douglas he met th' Erll of Anguisse at Dumfries, where, as he was hunting, he gave him welcome, saying he woulde give him hawkes and dogges, and caused him to pass the time with him that night; and on the morrowe brought hym with him to Douglas, and that afternoon sent for th' Erll of Cassillis, who, ryding all night, came thither the next day verly in the mornynge, whereupon he and th' Erll of Anguisse went into a chamber together, and called the said Forster unto them, who then declared the occasion of his comyng, by whom he was sent, and the full of his instructions. As to the first article, they answered that they were glad he was come, and was welcome to them." To the second article, they say they indeed wanted Forster to come; and in reply to the question, how Henry's godly purpose for the peace and marriage may best be furthered, Cassillis answers that he is still the same true man to Henry as he was at his parting with his majesty. Angus equally promised his cordial assistance, and declared he woulde either go to the field or stay at home, as Henry judged it best, and would maintain, in the face of all Scotland, that the peace and the marriage were for the good of the realme of Scotland. Forster then desired them to state to him such matters as they had intended to communicate by the gentleman that should have met Mr Sadler at Alnwick; upon which they briefly answered, that "the effect of that matter was none other than that they had already declared;" but Cassillis added, "that such other matters as should be at the convencion he woulde write it in cipher, and send it to Mr Sadleyr," and so departed from them; and returning again to Dalkeith

fantry and five hundred horse, under the command of the Sieur Lorges de Montgomerie, arrived off the west coast; but recollecting the device lately practised on their countrymen by the Earl of Lennox, this experienced officer was cautious of committing himself by landing till informed of the exact state of the country. Being assured, however, that the French politics were still pre-

unto George Douglas, he said he declared to the said George all his conference with the foresaid Earls, requiring him to shew him his opinion therein. Douglas promises to do so after the convention. Forster goes on to state that Douglas went then to the convention, where he tarried seven days. On the return of Douglas from this convention, Forster asked the news, and what he would do for the king's Majesty's advancement and godly affairs? Douglas answers, "that he will stand to it in all his power," the rather that he himself was one of them that "procured and promised the same, and that ther was never an honest man in Scotland that would be against that promise, for it was the doings of all the nobles of Scotland, and the Governor's part was therein as deep as the rest of them."—Another thing agreed on at the convention was, that "they would raise an army against the xxviiith of July, and to have them upon Roslin Moor, three miles from Dalkeith, with a month's victual, and so passing to invade England; by which tyme he saith the said Lorges Montgomerie hath undertaken on the French king's behalf, that th' army out of France by sea shall be ready to ayde them at their handes, or els at that time should invade in some other place of England. The said George Douglas told him also, that if my Lord-lieutenant thought mete th' army of Scotland were stayed, that then it should be well done to send some ships with diligence with three or four thousand men to ayde the gentlemen of the Isles, which would stay at home th' Earls of Huntly and Argyle, and by that meanes he thinks it would stop the rest of th' army from coming forward; and if it is not so, then to prepare a great power of England to come to the Borders against that time, which must come very strongly, for all the Lords and power of Scotland, as he sayth, will be wholly there, as they have promised. and by reason of th' encouragement of the Frenchmen and the fair largesses, that the French king hath promised them by Lorges Montgomerie, they are fully bent to fight as he sayth. But he saith, tho' that he must needs be also there with them, he will do them no good, but will do all that he can to stop them; and sayth, that if they may be stopped since they have made so gret braggis and avant to Lorges Montgomerie, it wold, as he thinketh, put away all the Commons' hearts from them." *

* The old spelling is not uniformly followed in the copy of this note.

minent, they disembarked at Dumbarton, and were received with much distinction; nor did the enthusiasm diminish when it was found they had brought a considerable sum of money for the emergencies of the war, a bodyguard of a hundred archers to wait on the governor's person, and the insignia of the Order of St Michael for Angus.¹ This favourable news the cardinal did not fail immediately to disseminate among his partisans; and a convention of the nobility being soon after held at Stirling, it was resolved that the league with France should be maintained, and hostilities immediately commenced against England, but with a great portion of the nobility these declarations were insincere. At this very moment Cassillis was organising his conspiracy for cutting off the cardinal; whilst his associates, Angus, Glencairn, and Sir George Douglas, had assured Forster, the English envoy, of their entire devotedness to his master. When the governor, therefore, assembled the Scottish host on the 9th of August, it was strong in apparent numbers, but weakened by treason and suspicion. From a force of thirty thousand men, with the veteran infantry of France, and a fine body of cavalry, including eighty barbed horse, something important was expected; and the people, whose feelings were strongly excited against England, looked with eager anxiety to the result. But they were miserably disappointed. The vanguard of the army was commanded by Angus; under him were the lords in the English interest, with the minor barons who followed them; and their indisposition to hostilities completely shackled the efforts of the remainder of the army. England was indeed invaded, but the operations were feeble and disunited. Hertford had made excellent dispositions for the defence of the Borders by his foreign mercenaries; the Spanish and Italian troops repelled the Scots with great gallantry; the preparations of many months led only to the sack of a few

¹ Intelligence by the Lord Wharton's espials, sent to the Earl of Hertford, June 11, 1545. State-paper Office.

obscure villages and the capture of some Border strengths; and after two days, the army of Scotland returned, to use the words of an ancient and authentic chronicle, "through the deceit of George Douglas and the vanguard."¹

It was on the 13th of August that this disastrous retreat took place, and three days after, the Scottish lords in the interest of England addressed from Melrose a letter to Henry, in which they claimed credit for the total failure of the invasion, and advised the immediate advance of the Earl of Hertford, with an overwhelming force, into the heart of the country, so well provided as to remain there for a lengthened period. They recommended him, at the same time, to march during the present harvest, and to publish a proclamation, declaring that he came not to hurt the realm or any subject in it who would assist in promoting the peace and marriage between the two countries. The letter is a remarkable one, and affords a melancholy proof of the true character of the men who, by our historians, are imagined to have at that moment entirely deserted the service of England.²

The Earl of Hertford was sufficiently eager to obey these instructions, although to support a main army for

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 40.

² State-paper Office, Letter, Hertford, Bishop of Durham, and Sir R. Sadler to the king, enclosing the letter from the Scottish earls, Aug. 25, 1545. The passage explaining the cause of the failure of the last invasion is curious, and completely corroborates the statement of the Diurnal of Occurrents quoted in the text, which statement is not to be found in any of our Scottish historians. "Further as to this last journey of ours, it was advised by the queen, cardinal, and this French captain, Lorges Montgomerie. Huntly fortified this armye at his power; notwithstanding, all that they devised was stopped by us that are the king's friends." If the reader will take the trouble to turn to Maitland, vol. ii. pp. 861, 862; or Lesley, pp. 456, 457; or Ridpath's Border History, p. 552; or Buchanan, book xv. c. 28, he will discover how much the history of this important period has been mistaken and perverted. It was, perhaps, the discrepancy between the Diurnal of Occurrents and these writers which misled its editor into the idea that its first portion was composed from tradition and other imperfect sources. Yet it is the Diurnal which is right whilst they are in the wrong.

any long period, and to follow the course pointed out by the Anglo-Scottish faction, required greater resources than Henry could command, and was not agreeable to the impetuous spirit of the monarch. Preparations had been already made for the intended invasion, not only by land; but for a naval descent on the west coast. Negotiations were opened, through the Earl of Lennox, with Donald, lord of the Isles and earl of Ross; and this petty prince, with eighteen of his barons, disclaiming in proud language all allegiance to Scotland, of which realm he described himself and his progenitors as the "auld enemies," entered willingly into the service of the English monarch, and bound themselves to assist Lennox with a force of eight thousand men.³ Henry, who had been instructed by Glencairn and Douglas in the important policy of keeping Argyle and Huntly in their own country by a diversion in the Isles, warmly welcomed the offers of the ocean prince, appointed him an annual pension, and encouraged him to assemble his forces. On the 18th of August, only a few days after the retreat of the governor, the Lord of the Isles passed over to Knockfergus in Ireland, with a fleet of a hundred and eighty galleys, and having on board a force of

³ Original Commission, 28th July 1545, apud Ellencarne, from Donald, lord of the Isles, and the Barons and Council of the Isles, to Rory Macalister, bishop elect of the Isles, and Patrick Maclane, to enter into a treaty with Matthew, earl of Lennox. The document (State-paper Office) is a diplomatic curiosity; not one of the Highland chieftains, eighteen in number, being able to write his name. To the Celtic antiquary and genealogist, whose feet do not usually rest on such certain ground, it may be interesting to give the names. They are, Hector Maclane, lord of Doward; Johne Macallister, capitane of Clanranald; Rorye Macleod of Lewis; Alexander Macleod of Dumbeggane; Murdoch Maclane of Lochbuy; Angus Maconnill, bruder germane to James Maconnill; Alane Maclane of Turloske, bruder germane to the Lord Maclane; Archibald Maconnill, capitane of Clan Houston; Alexander Mackeyn of Ardnamurchane; Jhone Maclane of Coll; Gilliganan Macneil of Barray; Ewin Macinnon of Straghordill; Jhone Macquorre of Ulway; Thom Maclane of Ardgour; Alexander Ranaldsoun of Glengarrie; Angus Ranaldsoun of Kewdort; Donald Maclane of Kengarrloch.

four thousand men. They are described in the original despatch from the Irish Privy-council, giving Henry notice of their arrival, as "very tall men, clothed for the most part in habergeons of mail, armed with long swords and long bows, but with few guns."¹ To co-operate with the Islesmen, Henry commanded the Earl of Ormond to raise a body of two thousand kerns and galloglasses, and appointed the Earl of Lennox to the chief command in the expedition ; but at this moment Hertford, now ready to invade Scotland, requested the presence of the Scottish earl in his camp, and the western invasion was postponed till the termination of the campaign.²

On the 5th of September the English commander assembled his army, and having previously sent word to Cassillis, Glencairn, and the two Douglases, that he expected they would join him with their vassals, he advanced to Alnwick, from which, rapidly pushing through Northumberland, he crossed the Border, and encamped before Kelso. The town, which was an open one, he occupied with ease; but the abbey held out, and the Spanish mercenaries who assaulted it were repulsed by the garrison, composed partly of monks. Hertford, however, brought up his ordnance, and a breach being effected, the church was carried, the steeple stormed, and its defenders put to the sword. In the meantime his friends, the Scottish earls, evaded his proposal of joining the army, and informed him by a secret messenger, who brought a letter in cipher, that they could not without danger assemble their forces till acquainted more minutely with his plans.³ No line of

¹ Letter, Irish Correspondence, State-paper Office, Privy-council to the King, August 12 and 13, 1545.

² August 23, 1545, Privy-council to Earl of Hertford; and August 27, 1545, Earl of Hertford and his Council to Secretary Paget. State-paper Office.

³ Original in cipher, State-paper Office, with the deciphered copy in the handwriting of Sir R. Sadler, then with the army, September 9, 1545, at Irvine. From the Earls of Angus, Cassillis, and Sir George Douglas, to Hertford.

conduct could have been adopted more discreditable to themselves or more unhappy in its consequences to the people. Had they been bold and consistent in their adherence to England, their extensive estates would have been exempted from plunder, and the peasantry would have escaped through the desertion of their lords; but their present conduct, whilst it brought all the evils, shared in none of the advantages of treachery, and only provoked Hertford to a more cruel and sanguinary retaliation. The lands of the potent house of Douglas lay principally in the districts now invaded. Melrose and Dryburgh were successively given to the flames; the villages, castles, and farm-granges of the adjacent country razed and plundered; and the miserable inhabitants suffered the utmost extremities of war, of which it would be painful to recapitulate the common tale of havoc and desolation. Jedburgh was burnt, and fourteen villages in the neighbourhood. Hertford, in a despatch to Henry, exultingly informed him it was the opinion of the Border gentlemen so much damage had not been done in Scotland by fire for the last hundred years. Nay, so excessive was the cruelty, that it shocked even the English Borderers; and as they evinced a disposition to be lenient, an advanced guard of a hundred Irish was appointed to burn and spoil the villages in a more complete manner.⁴

During these disgusting scenes the Scots were inactive. The experience of the last invasion had convinced the governor and the cardinal that Angus and his associates were more likely to betray than defend the country. Huntly and Argyle, dreading the meditated attack of Lennox and the Lord of the Isles on the west coast, were detained in their own country, and after one abortive attempt to promote union and resume hostilities, Arran appears to have abandoned the task in despair. Ten thousand men, who were with difficulty assembled, entered

⁴ Letter, Earl of Hertford and his Council to the King, Warkworth, September 18, State-paper Office.

England near Norham, burnt a single village, and, through the counsel of the Earl of Angus, on the first appearance of resistance, dispersed, and returned home.¹

The army of Hertford began now to suffer want in a country which they had reduced to a desert; and it was thought expedient to retreat. After reconnoitring Hume castle, which was found too strong to be carried by assault, the English commander swept in desolating progress through the Merse, burnt the towns and villages, razed the forts and peels, and, returning to Horton on the 23d of September, dismissed his forces—placing his Italian and Spanish mercenaries in garrisons on the Borders.² It appears from an original document, that during this inroad, which only lasted fifteen days, the destruction was dreadful, and sufficiently accounts for the deep and exasperated feelings of the Scottish people. The English burnt seven monasteries and religious houses, sixteen castles and towns, five market towns, two hundred and forty-three villages, thirteen mills, and three hospitals.³ Such were the arguments by which Henry endeavoured to persuade his neighbours that he was solicitous for a peaceful matrimonial union between the two countries. During the invasion a characteristic trait of the English monarch occurred. Some French soldiers in the service of the Scots deserted to Hertford, and the earl requested the king's advice whether they were to be received or trusted. His majesty, through his privy-council, replied that it was scarcely good policy to give credit to any men of that nation with whom he had mortal war, unless they would evince their sincerity by some previous exploit. He recommended Hertford, therefore, if any greater number of Frenchmen offered themselves, to

"advise them first to some notable damage or displeasure to the enemy;" and he particularised the "trapping or killing the cardinal, Lorges, the governor, or some other man of estimation, whereby it can appear that they bear hearty good-will to serve, which thing" continues the king, "if they shall have done, your lordship may promise them not only to accept the service, but also to give them such reward as they shall have good cause to be therewith right well contented."⁴

After the retreat of Hertford, the governor held a parliament at Stirling, in which the Earl of Lennox and his brother, the Bishop of Caithness, were declared guilty of treason.) The last meeting of the three estates had not been numerous, this was crowded by the nobles, and it was sarcastically said they came for land,⁵ expecting a share in the division of the large estates of Lennox now forfeited to the crown. Argyle, whose services had been conspicuous amid the desertion of the country by other noble houses, was rewarded with the largest share, whilst Huntly, another firm adherent of the government, received for his brother the bishopric of Caithness, and a portion of the property of Lennox for himself.⁶ It was determined, at the same parliament, that a force of a thousand men should be maintained for the defence of the marches, to be placed under the command of the bravest and most experienced Border barons; and a tax of sixteen thousand pounds was directed to be levied on the three estates for their support, whilst an additional body of a thousand men was raised at the expense of France.⁷ The cardinal, it was reported, meant to pass over to

¹ Original Draft, in Secretary Petre's handwriting, Privy-council to Earl of Hertford, September 9, 1545, State-paper Office.

² Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 40.

³ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 458, 459. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 41. Keith's Catalogue, p. 128.

⁴ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 41. The tax was to be raised conform to the Auld Taxations. * * * Ilk pund land of auld extent eight shillings. Acts of Parliament, vol. ii. p. 460.

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 40, corroborated by Orig. Letter of Hertford and his Council, Sept. 18, 1545, State-paper Office.

² Earl of Hertford and Council to the King, Horton, Sept. 23, 1545, State-paper Office.

³ Statement of fortresses, towns, &c., burnt and destroyed during the expedition, State-paper Office.

France with Lorges the French commander, with the purpose of subsidising a much larger force for the continuance of the war, whilst he laboured to induce the queen-mother, with the young queen, to reside in his castle of St Andrews; gaining the governor Arran to his views upon this point by tempting him with the splendid prize already offered to his ambition, the marriage of the young queen to his eldest son.

This intelligence was communicated to Henry by a letter in cipher from his active and unscrupulous correspondent the Laird of Brunston, (in a letter sent from Ormiston House, 6th October;) and in the same despatch he alluded darkly to his hopes that the intended journey of the cardinal to France would be cut short, assuring his royal employer that at no time were there more gentlemen desirous of doing him good service than at that moment.¹ He intimated, in a subsequent letter to Lord Hertford, his wish to have a private meeting with some one of the lords of the Privy-council; entreated that it might be kept secret, as a discovery might cost him both life and heritage; informed him that all his friends were ready whenever it pleased the king to command them; but stated that his majesty must be plain with them what he would have them to do, and explicit as to what they were to trust to on his part. In a letter of the same date from Brunston to the king, he requested a private interview with Sir R. Sadler at Berwick, reiterated his injunction of secrecy, as his communications might affect his life, and promised to communicate such things as should be greatly to the advancing of his majesty's affairs.² It seems probable from these expressions that the plot for the assassination of the

cardinal had been resumed; and as Brunston directed the king to send his answer to Coldingham, then belonging to Sir George Douglas, we may presume that Angus, Cassillis, and the Scottish earls were acquainted with these proceedings. Unfortunately at this moment those invaluable documents, the letters in the State-paper Office, break off abruptly, perhaps we may add suspiciously: there is a *hiatus* from October to March 27th, an interval of five months; and we are compelled to trace the ravelled history of this obscure but interesting period with such inferior guidance as is attainable elsewhere.

The intelligence lately received, that Beaton meditated a journey to France, and that the nobles had consented to the marriage of the young queen to the son of the governor, stimulated the English monarch to fresh exertions. Caerlaverock, Lochmaben, and Thrave, three castles of first-rate strength and importance, were the property of his prisoner Lord Maxwell. To get possession of these, and garrison them as rallying points for his adherents, and to carry into execution the invasion of the west of Scotland by Lennox and the Lord of the Isles, were the two projects which engaged Henry's attention. Lord Maxwell, like his other brethren, had been at first kindly treated by the king on the condition of furthering his projects; but his conduct was suspicious and vacillating; he possessed not the greatness of mind to remain in durance and continue faithful to his country, whilst he hesitated to devote himself exclusively to England. Threatened with being remanded to the Tower as a punishment for his repeated deceit, he was reduced to despair, offered to serve under Hertford with a red cross on his armour to shew that he was a true Englishman, and at last purchased his return to Scotland at the price of the delivery of Caerlaverock.³ But misfortune

¹ Letter in cipher, Laird of Brunston to the king's majesty, enclosed in a letter from the Earl of Hertford to Secretary Paget, October 20, 1545, State-paper Office. See extract in the Illustrations to this volume, letter B.

² Letter in cipher, with contemporary decipher, Brunston to the king, Calder, October 20, 1545, State-paper Office. See extract in the Illustrations, letter B.

³ Earl of Hertford, Bishop of Durham, and Sir R. Sadler to Secretary Paget, July 29, 1545, State-paper Office. *Diurnal of Occurrences*, p. 41.

pursued him: early in November the governor and the cardinal attacked and stormed this fortress, whilst Lochmaben and Thrave, held by his sons, experienced a similar fate; and Maxwell himself, being taken with his English confederates, was imprisoned in Dumfries.

For this disappointment Henry comforted himself with the hopes of success in the projected expedition against the west of Scotland. This prince, however, was either too precipitate or too dilatory.

Donald, lord of the Isles, who in August had passed over to Ireland with a potent fleet, in vain expected the arrival of Lennox, then absent with the English army in Scotland; and after a sojourn of some months returned to find an obscure grave in his own dominions. He bequeathed, however, his affection to the English king, and the more substantial hope of inheriting his pension, to his successor in the sovereignty of the Isles, James Macconnell, lord of Dunyvug; and Lennox having received information from Glencairn that the time was favourable for the recovery of the castle of Dumbarton, passed rapidly over to Ireland, opened a communication with the new Lord of the Isles, despatched his brother to practise on the fidelity of the constable, and taking the command of a body of two thousand men which had been levied by the Earl of Ormond, sailed from Dublin on the 17th of November with a formidable squadron.¹ Such an armament, according to the opinion expressed by the Irish Privy-council, had not left Ireland for the last two hundred years.²

Yet so great was the activity of Arran and the cardinal, that all these high hopes and preparations were destined to prove abortive. It appears

¹ "The 17th this present mth of November, the Earl of Lennox, together with th' Erle of Ormond, toke their journey out of your porte of Dublin, accompanied with 2000 men." Letter, Privy-council of Ireland to the king, 19th November 1545, State-paper Office.

² Orig. Letter, Irish Privy-council to the king, 19th November 1545, State-paper Office.

that the arrival of Lennox's brother, the Bishop of Caithness, and the admission of this prelate into the castle, had alarmed them. Stirling of Glorat, the constable, received Caithness with distinction; yet, as he had already refused to deliver the fortress to Lennox, he now declared that he would hold it out against all till his mistress the queen was of age to demand it for herself. It was closely besieged by Arran, Huntly, and Argyle; but having defied their utmost efforts, the cardinal and Huntly, who knew that the resolution of Scottish barons in that age was sooner moved by interest than by force, began to tamper with the ex-bishop and the constable, and succeeded in corrupting them. Caithness, bribed by the promise of his restoration to the see he had lost, proved false to his brother; and Stirling, for a high reward, was induced to deliver the fortress, in that age deemed impregnable, into the hands of the governor.³ Henry's last hope was thus destroyed, and the armament of Lennox and Ormond, probably informed on their passage of the disastrous result, does not appear to have even attempted a descent. Whether it retraced its course to Dublin, or, as on a former occasion, steered for Bristol, is not easily discoverable. It is, indeed, a curious illustration of the imperfection and carelessness of our general historians, both English and Scottish, that in neither the one nor the other do we find the slightest notice of a maritime expedition, which, by the letters of the Privy-council, seems in its outfit to have exhausted the exchequer and military resources of Ireland.

In his first invasion of Scotland Lennox had lost the powerful assistance of the Islesmen by his delay; in this last expedition he was deprived of it by precipitation. Had he waited for the arrival in Ireland of his envoy Colquhoun, whom he had sent to the Isles, he might have met with better success. James Macconnell, now Lord of the Isles, inherited all the animosity of his predecessor against Scot-

* Lesley, Hist., p. 457.

land; and, as soon as the unsettled state of his remote dominions permitted, opened a negotiation with the English monarch, and entered warmly into his views. He proposed to Henry that Lennox should be sent with an army to the Isle of Sanda beside Cantire, where he promised to join him with the whole strength of his kinsmen and allies; with Alaine Maclane of Gigha, his cousin, Clanranald, Clan-cameron, Clankayn, and his own surname or clan both north and south.¹ To these offers of this potent insular prince, the reply of Henry does not appear. They did not reach him, indeed, till the 15th February 1545-6, and before he had time to open a negotiation it is probable that the attention of the monarch was engrossed by the extraordinary events which took place in Scotland.

To explain these, it will be necessary to look back for a few moments to the progress of the reformed opinions in that country. Notwithstanding the utmost exertions of the cardinal, and the check which they had received from the apostacy of the governor, the doctrines of the Reformation had continued, since the last cruel executions at Perth,² to make a very perceptible progress. By many of those nobles, whom we have found in secret communication with England, they were openly professed; the Earls of Cassillis, Glencairn, and Marshal; the Lords Maxwell and Somerville; Crichton, laird of Brunston, with whose intrigues we are familiar; Cockburn of Ormiston, Sandilands of Calder, Douglas of Lang-Niddry, and many other barons and gentlemen, declared their conviction of their truth, condemned with just indignation the zeal which had kindled the flames of persecution in the country, and found an argument for the matrimonial alliance with England, in the support it must give to those who earnestly desired to see a purer faith and a more primitive worship established in Scotland. This

forms the best ground for their apology in their intrigues with Henry, and their designs for the subjection of the country to England; although it is not to be concealed, that in their secret correspondence with the English monarch, the establishment of true religion is rarely alluded to as a motive of action.

In those early days of the Reformed Church, its sincere converts had arisen, with few exceptions, amongst the religious orders themselves, or from the middle and lower classes of the people, men not wholly illiterate, as they have been unjustly represented, but who were led to the study of the Scriptures by their love of the truth, and over whose motives no suspicion of selfishness or of interest can be thrown. When such persons were dragged before the ecclesiastical tribunals, and refused to purchase their lives at the price of a recantation, the spectacle exhibited by their death compelled even the most indifferent spectator to some inquiry; and these inquiries led, in many cases, to conviction and conversion. Neither, during the whole of the period of which we now speak, were men exposed to such severities of persecution. Arran himself, the governor of the kingdom, was at one time a convert; and so long as he continued the profession of the reformed opinions, the Scriptures, under the authority of parliament, were openly read, the new doctrines preached by Rough and Williams within his household, and the books of the most eminent Reformers allowed to be imported into the country. His return, however, to the Roman Catholic Church produced a melancholy change; and the influence acquired over his mind by Hamilton, the abbot of Paisley, had the worst effects upon the infant Reformation. His preachers, as we have seen, were dismissed; the professors of the new opinions discountenanced and persecuted; the cardinal and his party artfully represented all innovators in religion as enemies to their country—an argument to which the conduct of the Earls of Cassillis, Glencairn, and the Douglases, gave much

¹ Privy-council of Ireland to the Privy-council of England, 16th February 1545, with the Lord of the Isles' letter enclosed. State-paper Office.

² Supra, p. 21.

force; it was deemed impossible that a man should be at the same time a friend to the independence of Scotland, and a friend to the independence of the human mind; the spirit of inquiry which had begun was suddenly put down, and the people were compelled once more to submit themselves to those blind guides, who were often remarkable for little else than their ignorance and licentiousness. The Catholic Church in Scotland had, indeed, in former times, been distinguished by some men who combined profound learning with a primitive simplicity of faith; even in this age it could boast of its scholars and poets; but at the period of which we now speak, its character for sanctity of manners, ecclesiastical learning, or zeal for the instruction of the people in the Word of life, did not rank high; and the example of its head and ruler, Beaton, a prelate stained by open profligacy, and remarkable for nothing but his abilities as a statesman and politician, was fitted to produce the worst effects upon the great body of the inferior clergy.

Such was the state of things when, in July 1543, George Wishart, commonly known by the name of the Martyr, returned to Scotland, in the company of those commissioners whom we have seen despatched for the negotiation of the marriage treaty with England.¹ Of his early history little is known with certainty. It is probable that he was the son of James Wishart of Pittarro, justice-clerk to James the Fifth; and as he was patronised in youth by John Erskine of Dun, well known as one of the earliest enemies of the Roman Catholic Church, to him he may have owed his instructions in the principles of the Reformation. Erskine was provost of Montrose; and here Wishart first became known as master of a school, where he evinced his zeal and learning by an at-

¹ This date of his arrival is important, as it marks the commencement of his preaching, and has been mistaken by Knox and all our ecclesiastical historians. All are agreed that Wishart arrived with the commissioners, and they certainly arrived in the interval between the 16th and the 31st of July 1543. This may be seen by comparing Sadler, vol. i. p. 235, with pp. 242-245.

tempt to instruct his pupils in Greek, as the original language of the New Testament. This exposed him to persecution; he fled to England, preached at Bristol against the offering of prayers to the Virgin; and being condemned for that alleged heresy, openly recanted his opinions, and burnt his faggot in the church of St Nicholas in that city. This happened in 1538. His history during the three following years is little known, but we again find him in England, and at Cambridge, in 1543. There his character was marked by a devotion slightly tinged with asceticism, but deep and sincere; by his ample charities to the poor, his meekness to his brethren and pupils, and the universality of his learning. On the other hand, to such as despised his instructions, there was about him a zeal and severity of reproof, which irritated the wicked, and sometimes even exposed his life to danger. Such at least is the description given of him by an affectionate pupil, who had spent a year under his tuition; and it is confirmed by Knox, his early disciple.

It may easily be imagined that the appearance at this time of such a man in Scotland was calculated to produce important effects. On his return, his chief supporters were the Earls of Cassillis and Glencairn, the Earl Marshal, Sir George Douglas, and the Lairds of Brunston, Ormiston, and Calder. Protected by their presence and influence, he preached in the towns of Montrose, Dundee, Perth, and Ayr, inveighing against the errors of Popery, and the profligacy of the Churchmen, with a severity and eloquence which made frequent converts, and led in some cases to acts of popular violence. At Dundee the houses of the Black and Gray Friars were destroyed;² similar attacks were attempted, but suppressed, in the capital; and when a regard for the preservation of peace and order induced the civil authorities to interfere, Wishart did not hesitate to threaten them with those de-

² Hamilton Papers quoted by Chalmers, Life of Mary, vol. ii. p. 403. See Illustrations, letter C.

nunciations of coming vengeance, by some writers pronounced prophetic; but for which there is no evidence that their author claimed this distinction. He enjoyed, it is to be remembered, the confidential intimacy, nay, we have reason to believe, that his counsels influenced the conduct of Cassillis, Glencairn, Brunston, and the party which were now the advisers of Henry's intended hostilities,—a circumstance which will perfectly account for the obscure warnings of the preacher without endowing him with inspiration.¹

From the time of his arrival in the summer 1543; for more than two years Wishart appears to have remained in Scotland, protected by the barons who were then in the interest of Henry, and who favoured the doctrines of the Reformation. Of his personal history during this period little is known. He continued his denunciations of the Roman Catholic superstitions, and inveighed with so much eloquence against the corrupt lives of the Churchmen, that, incurring the extreme odium of Beaton, he is said to have twice escaped the plots which this unscrupulous prelate had laid for his life.² It was during this interval, as we have already seen, that Henry the Eighth encouraged the conspiracy of Brunston, Cassillis, Glencairn, and others, to assassinate his enemy the cardinal. Of the existence of the plots against his life, Beaton was, to a cer-

¹ It was a little before the 4th of September 1543 that the riots took place at Dundee; and though Knox does not give the date, we may presume, with a near approach to certainty, that it was at this time Wishart was interdicted from preaching in that city. Now, a week only before this, Cassillis, Glencairn, Angus, and Maxwell, with all their adherents, were mustering their forces for a great effort, and had advised Henry the Eighth to send a main army into Scotland, (Sadler, vol. i. pp. 278-280;) whilst the Laird of Brunston, Wishart's great friend and protector, was to be sent on a mission to that monarch from the governor. The preacher thus lived in the intimacy of those who knew that a visitation of fire and sword was already determined on Scotland; and he naturally, perhaps justifiably, availed himself of that knowledge to make a salutary impression on his hearers.

² It ought to be stated that, in support of this assertion, we have no evidence from original or contemporary letters.

tain degree, aware; and, looking with suspicion on Wishart, not only as a disseminator of forbidden doctrines, but the friend of his most mortal enemies, he earnestly laboured to apprehend him. Of all this the reformer was so well advised from the spies of the English party, that he repeatedly alluded to his approaching fate. Yet, for a considerable time, he escaped every effort made against him. Nor was this surprising. When he preached, he was surrounded by mail-clad barons and their armed retainers. Since the time his life had been attempted, a two-handed sword was carried before him by some tried follower, and he himself, though generally meek and humble, shewed occasional outbreaks of a courage and fire which marked the education of a feudal age.

At length his anticipations were accomplished. Being at Dundee, he received a message from the Earl of Cassillis and the gentlemen of Kyle and Cunningham, requesting him to meet them in Edinburgh, where they intended to make interest that he should have a public disputation with the bishops. Wishart, obeying the summons, travelled to the capital, but his friends not having met him as they promised, he kept himself concealed for some days. He could not, however, restrain his desire to address the people; and being protected by the barons of Lothian, many of whom had then embraced the reformed opinions, he preached publicly at Leith, and afterwards at Inveresk, where Sir George Douglas declared his approbation of the doctrine, and his resolution to defend the person of the teacher. It was at this time, also, that John Knox, already in middle life, became deeply affected by his instructions, and eagerly attached himself to his society.³

During these transactions the governor and the cardinal arrived in Edinburgh; and Wishart's friends, Crichton of Brunston, and Cockburn of Ormiston, considering his residence at Leith unsafe, removed him to West

³ Knox's History, p. 52.

Lothian, where he remained concealed, in expectation of the arrival of Cassillis.¹ It is possible that the reformer was ignorant of the true character of Brunston,—a dark and busy intriguer, who, for more than two years, had been organising a conspiracy for the assassination of the cardinal. But if Wishart knew nothing of this, Beaton, as we have seen, was aware of the escapes he had made, and the snares still preparing against him; and when he heard that the preacher was in the neighbourhood, living under the protection of Brunston, waiting for the arrival of Cassillis, who had also offered to assassinate him, and about to hold a meeting with his enemies at Edinburgh, we are not to be surprised that he determined on his instant apprehension. That the reformer was aware of his danger is certain, for he alluded to it. Cassillis had failed to meet him; the power of his enemies was increasing; his congregations began to fall away; yet he resolved, amid all discouragements, once more to address the people, and in his last and most remarkable sermon, delivered at Haddington, alluded to the miseries about to fall upon the country. He then took a solemn farewell of his audience, and set out for the house of Ormiston, accompanied by Brunston, Sandilands of Calder, and Cockburn of Ormiston. At this moment Knox pressed to his side and eagerly desired to accompany him, offering to bear the two-handed sword, as he was wont; but Wishart affectionately dismissed him. "Nay," said he, "return to your pupils: one is sufficient for a sacrifice." At Ormiston that night he appeared unusually cheerful, addressed the friends assembled round him after supper, taking for his subject the death of God's children, and, after having sung a psalm, retired to rest. At midnight the house was surrounded by a party of soldiers; a loud voice from without, which was immediately recognised as that of the Earl of Bothwell, summoned its inmates to surrender; and Wishart, awaking with the clang of

arms in the court, at once apprehended the cause, and resolved to submit.² Resistance, indeed, would have been hopeless. The cardinal, by whom Bothwell had been sent, was within a mile, at the head of five hundred men; and Wishart, after an assurance that his life and person should be safe, surrendered himself to his captors. He was instantly carried to Elphinstone, where Beaton lay, who, finding that one victim only was taken, sent with the utmost expedition to seize his companions. In the confusion, Brunston escaped to the neighbouring woods, whilst Cockburn and Sandilands were apprehended, and shut up in the castle of Edinburgh. Meanwhile Bothwell carried his prisoner to Hailes, his own residence, and for some time appeared resolved to keep his promise; but at last the incessant importunity of Beaton, and the expectation of a high reward, got the better of his resolution, and the mean and mercenary baron delivered his victim into the hands of the cardinal.³

Having secured him, Beaton was not of a temper to hesitate in his measures, or adopt a middle course. He summoned a council of the bishops and dignified clergy to meet at St Andrews; requested the governor to nominate a judge whose presence might give a civil sanction to their proceedings; and, being refused by the timidity or humanity of Arran, determined to proceed on his own authority.⁴ The alleged heretic was immediately arraigned before the spiritual tribunal, and defended his opinions meekly but firmly, and with a profound knowledge of Scripture. He appealed to the Word of God as the sole rule by which he was guided in the doctrines he had taught the people; as he was ready to admit all its precepts, so was he bound, he declared, to refuse and deny everything which it condemned, whilst he deemed of little consequence such points as it left in obscurity. He maintained his

² Knox's History, pp. 53, 54.

³ Spottiswood's History, p. 79.

⁴ Lesley, p. 191. Knox's History, pp. 55, 56.

right to preach, notwithstanding his excommunication by the Church, and contended that any man, with fervent faith, and a sufficient knowledge of Scripture, might be a teacher of the Word of life. He declared the insufficiency of outward ceremonies to salvation when the heart was unaffected, derided auricular confession, and admitted only such sacraments as were recorded in Scripture. Of fasting he warmly approved; upheld the Lord's Supper as a Divine and comfortable institution; maintained the necessity of our fully understanding the vows taken for us in our baptism; condemned the invocation of saints and the doctrine of purgatory as unscriptural, and asserted his belief that, immediately after death, the soul would pass into a state of immortal life and unfading felicity. Whilst he defended his own creed, supporting it by a constant reference to Scripture, he did not hesitate to stigmatise the doctrine of his opponents in unmeasured terms; pronouncing it "pestilential, blasphemous, and abominable, not proceeding from the inspiration of God, but the suggestions of the devil." The result of all this was easy to be anticipated; Wishart was found guilty of heresy, and sentenced to be burned. The trial took place at St Andrews, and no time was lost in carrying the sentence into effect.¹

On the 28th of March he was led from the prison, with a rope about his neck, and a large chain round his middle, to the place of execution, in front of the castle, which was the archiepiscopal palace of the cardinal. Here a scaffold had been raised, with a high stake firmly fixed in the midst of it. Around it were piled bundles of dry faggots; beside them stood an iron grate containing the fire, and near it the solitary figure of the executioner. Nor did it escape the observation of the dense and melancholy crowd which had assembled, that the guns of the fortress were brought to bear directly on the platform, whilst the gunners stood with their matches beside them,—a jealous precaution,

suggested, perhaps, by the attempt of Duncan to deliver the reformer Hamilton, and which rendered all idea of rescue in this case perfectly hopeless. On arriving at the place, Wishart beheld these horrid preparations, which brought before him the agony he was to suffer, with an unmoved countenance; mounted the scaffold firmly, and addressed a short speech to the people, in which he exhorted them not to be offended at the Word of God, by the sight of the torments which it seemed to have brought upon its preacher, but to love it, and suffer patiently for it any persecution which the sin of unbelieving men might suggest.² He declared that he freely forgave all his enemies, not excepting the judges who had unjustly condemned him. The executioner came up to him at this moment, fell on his knees, and begged his forgiveness with much earnestness, as he was not guilty of his death. "Most willingly do I tender it," said Wishart, and kissed him. "Now be of good courage, my heart, and do thine office; thou hast received a token that I forgive thee." He then knelt down and prayed audibly:—"O Thou Saviour of the world, have mercy on me; Father of heaven, into Thy hands I commit my spirit." Having thrice repeated these words, he arose from his knees, and declared, without any perceptible emotion, that he was ready. The hooks were then fixed in the iron chain which was girt round his loins; and being raised on the gibbet, and the faggots kindled, he was first strangled by the rope, which was pulled tightly round his neck, and then consumed to ashes.³

It was impossible for the people to behold unmoved so cruel an execution. It was remembered also that the governor had refused his concurrence,—that the sanction of the civil authority had been withheld; and the fate of Wishart was pronounced unjust and illegal. That many of his opinions were such as the Church deemed heretical could not be denied; but mer-

² Knox, p. 64. Spottiswood, p. 82.

³ Knox's History, pp. 68, 69. Spottiswood's History, pp. 81, 82.

¹ Knox's History, pp. 59-66, inclusive.

had now begun to appeal to the Word of God as the test of the truth; and to be subjected to such inhuman torments for the declaration of precepts believed to be founded on the Bible, was esteemed monstrous. The courage, meekness, and patience with which the reformer had borne his sufferings, produced a deep effect, and the invariable results of persecution were soon discernible in a spirit of increasing investigation, a revulsion from the tyranny of power, and a steady progress in the new opinions.

But amid lamentations for their favourite preacher, deeper feelings were mingled. Whispers of revenge began to circulate amongst the people; hints were thrown out that God would not long suffer such cruelty to go unpunished; and, in those days of ignorance, when a stern fanaticism was mingled in the same minds with the darkness and cruelty of a feudal age, an opinion began to be entertained that the example of the Old Testament heroes, in cutting off a determined persecutor, was not unworthy of imitation. Such sentiments were not lost upon those men, who, under the influence of far baser motives, had, as we have seen, already organised a conspiracy for the assassination of the cardinal. Cassillis, Glencairn, Sir George Douglas, Crichton of Brunston, with the Laird of Grange and the Master of Rothes, had been prevented by various causes from accomplishing their purpose; the difficulty of binding Henry the Eighth to a direct promise of reward, and the discernment of Beaton, who, although he could not wholly discover, detected the working of some dark purpose against his life, had interrupted and balked the authors of the plot; and they hailed the feelings excited by the fate of Wishart as a new means placed in their hands for the accelerating the catastrophe which they so ardently desired.

(With the people Beaton had formerly been popular, as the determined enemy of England); but they now openly inveighed against his cruelty. John Lesley, brother of the Earl of

Rothes, did not hesitate to declare in public that he would have blood for blood; and his nephew, Norman Lesley, with Kirkaldy of Grange, had entered into a close correspondence with England.¹ With these, others of inferior name, but of higher honesty, were associated; and it cannot be doubted that some men, who before the death of Wishart would have spurned at any proposal of an association with persons whose motives were so mercenary, were induced, after that event, to applaud, and even to join in their attempt. Of all these circumstances Brunston and his friends were not slow to avail themselves: nor are we to forget, that if their minds had been already made up on the necessity of ridding themselves of the cardinal, the desire of avenging the fate of their friend must have whetted their slumbering purpose to new activity.

It is probable that Beaton, naturally presumptuous, disregarded any open threats as the ebullition of impotent resentment. (The voice of his flatterers amongst the clergy declared that his salutary severity had saved the Church) he was strong in the alliance of France; the schemes of the English faction had latterly been unsuccessful; and it is said that, adopting a practice common in that age, he had strengthened himself by procuring bonds of manrent from Norman Lesley, and many of the most powerful nobles. Soon after the death of Wishart, he took a progress into Angus, and was present at the marriage of one of his natural daughters, Margaret Bethune, to David Lindsay, master of Crawford, which was celebrated with great magnificence at Finhaven castle, the prelate bestowing upon the bride a dowry little inferior to that of a princess.²

When absent on this festive occasion, intelligence was brought that Henry the Eighth was urging forward his preparations for a new invasion; and he hurried to Fife with the object of fortifying his castle of St Andrews, which he dreaded might be made a

¹ Knox's History, p. 70. Spottiswood's History, p. 82.

² Knox's History, p. 70.

principal point of attack, and of procuring the barons, whose estates were contiguous to the coast, to strengthen it against the enemy. In the last invasion, the country, without a blow, had been abandoned to indiscriminate devastation; and having resolved to prevent a repetition of such disgrace, he summoned a meeting of the neighbouring gentry to consult on the best means for the defence of the kingdom.

In the midst of these exertions he seems to have forgotten the secret enemies by whom he was surrounded, whilst they continued more warily than before to hold correspondence with England. In his last letters, the Laird of Brunston, whose mortal enmity to Beaton has been amply shewn, complained to Lord Wharton that the King of England was neither sufficiently definite in his commands, nor explicit in his promises of reward; but he expressed, at the same time, the readiness of his friends to serve the king, his wish to have a meeting with Lord Wharton in the most secret manner, as a discovery might cost him both life and heritage, and his fervent expectation, that although Beaton now intended a voyage to France, it would be cut short.¹ There seems, however, reason to believe, that although the designs for the assassination of the prelate had been long maturing, and were thus gradually gathering round him, a private quarrel between him and Norman Lesley precipitated their accomplishment. This young baron, known by the name of the Master of Rothes, had resigned to Beaton, on the promise of a valuable equivalent, the estate of Easter Wemyss in Fife.² In the meeting at St Andrews he claimed the stipulated reward, and receiving what he deemed an equivocal reply,

remonstrated with freedom; warm words followed; the cardinal complained of insulted dignity; and Norman, answering with scorn, departed in deep wrath. Repairing to his uncle, John Lesley, he complained of the injury he had sustained, and both were of opinion that after what had passed delay would be dangerous. Messages were accordingly sent to the Laird of Grange and others, whose readiness to join in the attempt had, we may presume, been already ascertained; and it was determined that the murder should be committed without delay.

On the evening of the 28th of May Norman Lesley came, with only five followers, to St Andrews, and rode, without exciting suspicion, to his usual inn. William Kirkaldy of Grange was there already; and they were soon joined by John Lesley, who took the precaution of entering the town after nightfall, as his appearance, from his known enmity to Beaton, might have raised alarm. Next morning at day-break the conspirators assembled in small detached knots in the vicinity of the castle; and the porter having lowered the drawbridge to admit the masons employed in the new works, Norman Lesley, and three men with him, passed the gates, and inquired if the cardinal was yet awake? This was done without suspicion; and as they were occupied in conversation, James Melville, Kirkaldy of Grange, and their followers entered unnoticed; but on perceiving John Lesley, who followed, the porter instantly suspected treason, and springing to the drawbridge, had unloosed its iron fastening, when the conspirator Lesley anticipated his purpose by leaping across the gap. To despatch the porter with their daggers, cast the body into the fosse, and seize the keys of the castle, employed but a few minutes, and all was done with such silence, as well as rapidity, that no alarm had been given. With equal quietness, the workmen who laboured on the ramparts were led to the gate and dismissed; Kirkaldy, who was acquainted with the castle, then took his station at a private postern, through

¹ At this moment (20th October 1545) our best guides, the State Papers, unfortunately fail us, and the rest of the history of Beaton's death is to be gathered from less authentic sources. That these friends of Brunston, so willing to obey the commands of Henry, were the same men who had formerly offered, through Brunston, to slay the cardinal, there seems little reason to doubt.

² Spottiswood's History, p. 82.

which alone any escape could be made; and the rest of the conspirators going successively to the apartments of the different gentlemen who formed the prelate's household, awoke them, and threatening instant death if they spoke, led them, one by one, to the outer wicket, and dismissed them unhurt. In this manner a hundred workmen and fifty household servants were disposed of by a handful of men, who, closing the gates, and dropping the portcullis, were complete masters of the castle.¹ Meanwhile Beaton, the unfortunate victim against whom all this hazard had been encountered, was still asleep; but awakening and hearing an unusual bustle, he threw on a nightgown, and drawing up the window of his bedchamber, inquired what it meant. Being answered that Norman Lesley had taken the castle, he rushed to the private postern; but seeing it already guarded, returned speedily to his apartment, seized his sword, and, with the assistance of his page, barricaded the door on the inside with his heaviest furniture. John Lesley now coming up, demanded admittance. "Who are you?" said the cardinal. "My name," he replied, "is Lesley." "Is it Norman?" asked the unhappy man, remembering, probably, the bond of manrent; "I must have Norman; he is my friend." "Nay, I am not Norman," answered the ruffian, "but John, and with me ye must be contented;" upon which he called for fire, and was about to apply it to the door, when it was unlocked from within. The conspirators now rushed in; and Lesley and Carmichael throwing themselves furiously upon their victim, who earnestly implored mercy, stabbed him repeatedly. But Melville, a milder fanatic, who professed to murder, not from passion, but religious duty, reproved their violence. "This judgment of God," said he, "ought to be executed with gravity, although in secret;" and presenting the point of his sword to the bleeding

prelate, he called on him to repent of his wicked courses, and especially of the death of the holy Wishart, to avenge whose innocent blood they were now sent by God. "Remember," said he, "that the mortal stroke I am now about to deal is not the mercenary blow of a hired assassin, but the just vengeance which hath fallen on an obstinate and cruel enemy of Christ and the Holy Gospel." On his saying this, he repeatedly passed his sword through the body of his unresisting victim, who sank down from the chair to which he had retreated, and instantly expired.²

The alarm had now risen in the town; the common bell was rung; and the citizens, with their provost, running in confused crowds to the side of the fosse, demanded admittance, crying out that they must instantly speak with my lord cardinal. They were answered from the battlements that it would be better for them to disperse, as he whom they called for could not come to them, and would not trouble the world any longer. This, however, only irritated them the more, and being urgent that they would speak with him, Norman Lesley reproved them as unreasonable fools, who desired an audience of a dead man; and dragging the body to the spot, hung it by a sheet over the wall, naked, ghastly, and bleeding from its recent wounds. "There," said he, "there is your god; and now that ye are satisfied, get you home to your houses,"—a command which the people instantly obeyed.³

Thus perished Cardinal David Beaton, the most powerful opponent of the reformed religion in Scotland, by an act which some authors, even in the present day, have scrupled to call murder. To these writers the secret and long-continued correspondence of the conspirators with England was unknown,—a circumstance, perhaps, to be regretted, as it would have spared some idle and angry reasoning. By its disclosure we have been enabled to

¹ Knox's History, pp. 71, 72. Letter, James Lindsay to Lord Wharton, State-paper Office. See Illustrations, letter B, Remarks on the Murder of Beaton.

² Knox's History, pp. 71, 72. Lesley, p. 191.

³ Spottiswood's History, p. 83.

trace the secret history of these iniquitous times, and it may now be pronounced, without fear of contradiction, that the assassination of Beaton was no sudden event, arising simply out of indignation for the fate of Wish-

art, but an act of long-projected murder, encouraged, if not originated, by the English monarch; and, so far as the principal conspirators were concerned, committed from private and mercenary considerations.¹

CHAPTER II.

M A R Y.

1546—1554.

THE murder of Cardinal Beaton was followed, as might have been anticipated, by results the most important. It removed from the head of affairs a man, whose talents for political intrigue, and whose vigorous and unscrupulous character, had for some time communicated strength and success to the government; it filled with alarm that party in Scotland which was attached to the ancient faith, and cherished the freedom and independence of the country; whilst it infused new spirit into the powerful faction which had been courted and kept in pay by Henry the Eighth, and through whose assistance this monarch looked forward to the accomplishment of his favourite schemes—the marriage of the youthful Queen of Scotland to his son the Prince of Wales, the establishment of the Reformation, and the entire subjugation of this country under the dominion of England.

If the fact had not been already apparent, the events which immediately succeeded the assassination of the cardinal rendered it impossible for any one to escape the conclusion, that the conspiracy had been encouraged by the English monarch. Scarcely was the act perpetrated, when letters were despatched to Lord Wharton the English warden, by some of those numerous spies whom he retained, describing

the consternation which the event had produced in the capital, the change in affairs which was likely to ensue, and the necessity for immediate exertion on the part of his master.² On the other hand, the conspirators, who had seized the castle of St Andrews, were soon joined by many adherents, previously the most zealous supporters of the English interests; and who, although not present at the murder, believed that it would subject them to suspicion and persecution;³ amongst these the most noted was John Knox, the great advocate and supporter of the Reformation.

This extraordinary man, whose future career was connected with so many great events, was now forty years old. Born in 1505 of parents in the middle rank of rural life, and wealthy enough to give him a learned education, he had been sent in 1521 to the University of Glasgow, where he distinguished himself in philosophy

¹ See Illustrations, letter B.

² MS. Letter in State-paper Office. Original from Lord Wharton, June 2, 1546, enclosing three letters which he had received from Scotland.

³ Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii. p. 80, dorsum. They amounted to seven score persons; among them the Laird of Grange, Henry Balnaves, a Senator of the College of Justice, Henry Primrose, the Laird of Pitmillie, Mr John Lesley, Sir John Aucheneleck, and sundry gentlemen of the name of Melvin

and scholastic theology, and took priests' orders, previous, it is said, to his having attained the regular canonical age. It is difficult to fix the time when his mind became unsettled on the grounds of his adherence to the communion of the Roman Catholic Church, and it is remarkable that the labours of his numerous biographers have left his history from birth to middle age almost a blank. The fact asserted by Beza, of his having been condemned as a heretic and degraded from the priesthood, rests on no certain evidence. It has been stated also, by Dr M'Crie, that he publicly professed himself a Protestant in 1542. This learned author, however, has given no satisfactory authority for this fact, and I have found no trace of such a public declaration of his belief previous to the capture and execution of George Wishart in 1545. But the step which he now took was decisive. By casting in his lot with the assassins of the cardinal he openly declared his approval of the principles on which they acted; and they, as we may easily believe, warmly welcomed such an accession to their party.

Whilst such was the conduct of the English faction, the governor Arran and the queen-regent exerted themselves to maintain the cause of order, and to bring to punishment those bold and daring men who had so unscrupulously taken the law into their own hands.¹ A convention of the nobility, spiritual and temporal, was held at Stirling on the 10th of June; and nothing was left unattempted by which a cordial union might be promoted amongst the parties which separated and distracted the state. The meeting was attended by the chief persons of both factions: by the Earls of Angus, Cassillis, and Glencairn, to whose devotion to the English interests many of the late disorders might be attributed; as well as by Huntly, Argyle, and the Lords Fleming and Elphinstone, who were the leaders in the faction attached to France, and interested in the support of the ancient

faith.² To conciliate the lords of the English party, Arran the governor solemnly renounced the contract for the marriage of the young queen to his son; the "bands" or feudal agreements by which many of the nobles had promised to see this alliance carried into effect were annulled, and, at the same time, the queen-regent released from their written obligations all such barons as had stipulated to oppose the ambitious matrimonial designs of the governor.³ On the other hand,⁴ the Earl of Angus, Sir George Douglas, and Lord Maxwell,⁴ cordially embraced the interest of the queen-regent; approved of the late act of the Scottish parliament, which had dissolved the peace with England; derided all idea of a marriage between Prince Edward and the young queen; and renounced for ever all those "bands" by which they had tied themselves to Henry, and which had been repeatedly renewed, or forgotten, as their private interest seemed to dictate: Maxwell, who was now made warden of the west marches, once more took possession of the strong castle of Lochmaben; and twenty peers were selected, out of which number four were directed to remain every successive month with the governor at his secret council.⁵

² MS. Book of the Privy-council of Scotland. Entitled, *Liber Secreti Consilii*, 1545, fol. 28, p. 2. The members present were the Bishops of Orkney and Galloway; the Earls of Angus, Huntly, Argyle, Bothwell, Glencairn, and Sutherland; the commendator of Kelso, the Abbots of Melrose, Paisley, Dunfermline, Cupar, Crosregal, Dryburgh, and Culross; with the Lords Fleming, Ruthven, Maxwell, Somerville, Hay of Yester, Innermeith, Elphinstone, Livingstone, Erskine, Sir George Douglas, and Sir William Hamilton.

³ MS. Book of Privy-council, fol. 30, p. 2.

⁴ In Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii. p. 81, we find that Robert, lord Maxwell, died in July 1546, and his second son John returned home out of England, and took upon him the government of the country within the wardenship.

⁵ On the expiration of the month, their place was to be occupied by other four chosen from the remaining sixteen, and so on throughout the year. Care was also taken to select at this convention each party of four who were to serve in rotation, and to intimate to them the month during which they were to give their attendance on the governor; and it was agreed that when five months had expired, the same councillors should resume

¹ Knox's History, p. 74. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 866.

The Lords Erskine and Livingston were continued in their charge of the person of the young queen; and the important office of chancellor, now vacant by the assassination of Beaton, was conferred upon the tried fidelity of the Earl of Huntly.¹ Peace having been lately concluded between England and France, and a clause inserted in the treaty, of which Scotland might, if she chose, avail herself, it was determined by the Privy-council that "the comprehension should be accepted, without prejudice to the queen, her realm, and its liberties." A conciliatory reply was at the same time directed to be made to the English monarch, who had complained of the depredations committed by Scottish privateers upon his merchantmen.²

Having endeavoured to secure the kingdom from without, it only remained to appease its internal commotions by adopting decided measures against the conspirators who held the castle of St Andrews. Accordingly, their duties in the same order.—MS. Book of the Privy-council, fol. 29, p. i. "It is devised and ordained by the queen's grace, my lord governor, and hail lords convened in this convention, that certain lords remain with my lord governor, and be of secret council with him, and they to remain monthly with him, and that to the number of four. The 1st month to begin this day the 10th of June.

The 1st month,

10th June to 10th of July.

Robert, bishop of Orkney.

George, earl of Huntly.

William, lord Ruthven.

Sir George Douglas of Pittendreich, kt.

2d month.

Gavin, arch. of Glasgow.

Arch., earl of Angus.

Hew, lord Somerville.

George, abbot of Dunfermline.

3d month.

William, bishop of Dunblane.

Arch., earl of Argyle.

William, earl of Glencairn.

Donald, abbot of Cupar.

4th month.

Patrick, bishop of Moray.

Patrick, earl Bothwell.

Gilbert, earl Cassillis.

Malcolm, lord Fleming.

5th month.

William, earl Marshal.

William, earl of Montrose.

Andrew, bishop of Galloway.

Sir Wm. Hamilton of Sanquhar, kt."

¹ MS. Book of Privy-council, fol. 28, p. 2.

² Ibid., fol. 38, p. 1. Ibid., fol. 40, p. 2.

after an ineffectual attempt to negotiate, a parliament was convoked, (29th July 1546,) in which they were declared guilty of treason:³ proclamation was made, interdicting all persons from affording them the slightest assistance in their rebellion, and the governor having assembled an army, commenced the siege, with a determination speedily to reduce the fortress. This, however, was found a task of no easy execution: it was naturally strong, and its fortifications had been repaired at great expense by its late master; on the one side the sea rendered it impregnable, and on the land quarter the thickness of its walls defied the imperfect and ill-served artillery of the times. Beaton, from a principle of security, had provisioned it fully against attack, and even were it attempted to starve out the garrison, the English fleet which commanded the Firth might at any time throw in supplies. To secure this support, the conspirators, or *Castilians*⁴ as they were termed, lost no time in opening a communication with Henry the Eighth. Kirkaldy of Grange, Balnaves, and John Lesley were sent as envoys to that monarch; and they returned with an assurance of his assistance, on condition that they would promote the marriage between the young queen and the Prince of Wales, and retain in their hands the eldest son of Arran, who had been made prisoner at the time they seized the castle.⁵ Confident in their strength, the besieged derided all the efforts of the governor; and, despising the prayers and remonstrances of those enemies of the Catholic Church, men who, with a mistaken zeal for the Reformation, had joined their party, they abandoned themselves to every species of intemperate indulgence.⁶ Meanwhile, month after month stole away without any perceptible progress in the siege. Application for assistance was made to France, by Panter, secretary to the

³ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 478, 479.

⁴ So termed from their holding possession of the castle of Edinburgh.

⁵ Anderson. MS. Hist., vol. ii. p. 82.

⁶ Knox, History of Reformation, p. 83.

queen, who was sent ambassador to that country.¹ Remonstrances against any intended interference for the defence of the Castilians were addressed to England;² but after every effort had been exhausted, it was discovered that the only prospect of success lay in an endeavour to cut off all supplies and starve out the garrison. It may convey to us some idea of the imperfection of the military art in these times, when we find a single castle, with a small garrison, resisting for a long period the utmost efforts of the governor. To make himself master of it he divided the kingdom into four great districts, and the military force of each division was brought successively to bear upon the fortress,³ yet without any nearer prospect of success. At length, towards the end of December, the garrison shewed a disposition to capitulate; their principal defences were greatly injured by the artillery, and they began to suffer from a scarcity of provisions and sickness.⁴ Had Arran been aware of this, instead of listening to any offer for a cessation of hostilities, he might within a short period have made himself master of the place; but, ignorant of the real condition of the besieged, he accepted terms dictated to him by men who were at the last extremity. They consented to deliver up the castle as soon as a Papal absolution was obtained for the slaughter of the cardinal; they stipulated for a free pardon; and, in the interval between the commencement of the armistice and the arrival of the absolution, insisted on retaining the fortress,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 31st March 1547. Panter to the Protector Somerset.

² The governor consented to an act by which his eldest son, James Hamilton, then a prisoner, was disinherited till he should recover his freedom, and his second son appointed in his place. This precautionary measure was adopted to make it impossible that under any circumstances the throne should be occupied by a prince who was a captive in the hands of the enemy.—*Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 474.

³ MS. Book of Privy-council, fol. 40, p. 1. *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 42.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office. Report of the Proceedings relative to the castle of St Andrews. It fixes the date of the appointment or armistice, which is variously given by our historians, to have been the 17th December.

and keeping possession of the governor's son as a hostage for the performance of the treaty. At the same moment that these proposals were transmitted to Arran, the Castilians sent an envoy to Henry the Eighth, informing him of their proceedings, declaring that their only object was to gain time to revictual the castle; that they had no intention whatever of abiding by their agreement; and would thus be able to perform their first promises to the English monarch. For this purpose they requested Henry to write to the emperor, causing him to intercede with the Pope “for the stopping and hindering of their absolution,” by which means a longer time would be given them to accomplish their purposes.⁵

Meanwhile Arran accepted the conditions of the armistice, being solicitous, as has been alleged, to protract the time till the arrival of foreign assistance; and intending to be as little faithful to his agreement as his opponents. He had despatched Panter the secretary as ambassador to France, with an earnest request that the French monarch would fulfil those treaties of alliance which had so long connected the two kingdoms; he called upon him, if Henry would not consent to peace with Scotland, to declare war against him; he entreated him to increase his fleet, the surest arm of defence against the enterprises of England; requested an immediate supply in money, arms, and artillery, and in consequence of the ignorance of the Scottish engineers, required the assistance of some experienced men, learned in the attack and defence of fortified places, and who understood the “ordering of battles.”⁶

In the meantime an extraordinary and interesting scene took place within the besieged fortress. Knox, as we have seen, had retreated into the castle and joined the conspirators. He was

⁵ MS., State-paper Office. Report of the Proceedings relative to the castle of St Andrews.

⁶ MS. Book of Privy-council, fol. 51, p. 2, fol. 52, p. 1. Articles to be desired at the King of France, for the help and supply to be given to this realm against the King of England.

accompanied by the Barons of Ormiston and Lang-Niddry and their sons, whose education he conducted. In the chapel within the fort he catechised his pupils, and delivered lectures on the Scriptures, where a little congregation was soon assembled, who earnestly entreated him to preach publicly to the people. This, however, he at first peremptorily declined, observing "that he would not run where God had not called him;"¹ but they who were deeply interested in his assuming the office of the ministry, for which they believed him to be eminently qualified, determined to overcome his reluctance. John Rough, whom we have seen dismissed, on account of his zeal for the Reformation, from the situation of chaplain to Arran the governor, had taken refuge with the rest in the fortress, and on a certain day which had been agreed on, having selected as the subject of his discourse the power resident in a congregation to elect their minister, and the danger of rejecting their call, he, on the conclusion of the sermon, turned abruptly to Knox who was present—"Brother," said he, "I charge you, in the name of God, in the name of His Son, and in the name of this congregation, who now call upon you by my mouth, that you take upon you the office of preaching, and refuse not this holy vocation, as you would avoid God's heavy displeasure." The address was solemn, and totally unexpected by Knox, who, confused and agitated, in vain attempted to reply, but bursting into tears, retired from the assembly.² After a few days of great conflict and distress of mind, he accepted the invitation; and without any further ceremony or ordination than that already received previous to his adoption of the reformed opinions, he assumed the public office of a preacher.³ The reformer was then in the forty-first year of his age.

In the midst of these scenes occurred the death of Henry the Eighth,

¹ Knox's History, vol. i. p. 74.

² Ibid., p. 75.

³ M'Crie's Life of Knox, p. 40. Edition 1812. Ibid., p. 43. Ibid., p. 11.

which was followed not long after by that of his great contemporary, Francis the First; but these events did not at first materially alter the policy of either kingdom. Francis, notwithstanding his occasional political predilection for the Protestants, had been an earnest disciple of the Roman Catholic Church; and the great preponderance of the house of Guise, under his successor, Henry the Second, inclined that monarch more vigorously to support the same party in Scotland. Immediately after his coronation, Monsieur d'Osell was despatched to that country to confirm the league which had so long bound its interests to France; assurances of support were liberally held out against the ambitious designs of England; and D'Osell, who enjoyed the intimate confidence of the queen-dowager, remained as ambassador at the Scottish court.⁴

In England, the accession of Edward the Sixth, then a promising boy in his tenth year, and the assumption of the protectorate by his uncle, the Earl of Hertford, now Duke of Somerset, brought no change of policy in dealing with Scotland. Henry, it is said, on his death-bed had earnestly recommended the prosecution of the war with that country, under the mistaken idea that the Scots would be compelled at the point of the sword to fulfil the treaty of marriage; and Somerset, by one of the first acts of his government, shewed a determination to carry this injunction into effect. On the 6th of February, Balnaves repaired to the English court as envoy from the Castilians, and received from the protector a confirmation of the annuities which had attached to England the conspirators against Beaton. It was resolved to strengthen the garrison of the castle by remitting money for the maintenance of troops; Lesley, one of the assassins, was commanded to remain at court to communicate with his friends; and Balnaves received injunctions, on his return to Scotland, to use his utmost efforts to seduce the nobility

⁴ Lesley, Bannatyne edition, p. 193. 31st March 1547.

from their allegiance to the governor.¹

Somerset at the same time determined to lead an army into Scotland. He addressed a letter to the nobility of that realm, reminding them of the league by which they had bound themselves to assist the late King of England in the accomplishment of his designs; he called upon them for a performance of their promises; and so successful was Balnaves in his intrigues, that many of the Scottish nobles and barons shewed a readiness to repeat the same disgraceful game by which they had enriched themselves under the former reign.²

In the midst of these difficulties which disturbed his government, Arran exerted himself to create a vigorous union against the enemies of the country. Suspicious, from the experience of the former reign, that other designs than a simple matrimonial alliance were contemplated by England, and aware of the preparations for invading the kingdom, he laboured to attach the chief nobility to his service, to strengthen the Border defences, and to train the people, by weapon-schawings or armed musters, which had been of late much disused, to greater skill in military exercises; he encouraged the equipment of privateers and armed merchantmen, as the only substitute for a national fleet; and he anxiously endeavoured to compose those destructive and sanguinary feuds amongst some of the principal barons which had of late years greatly increased, and, even in the midst of peace, exposed the state to all the horrors of war.³

Such being the threatening aspect of both countries, hostilities could not be long delayed. A Scottish privateer, named the *Lion*, was captured by the *Pevensy*, an English ship: in reply to

¹ MS. Privy-council Records of Edward VI., p. 9.—Transcript by Gregory King, Lancaster herald.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office.—Laird of Langton to the Protector Somerset, August 18, 1547: Also Patrick, lord Gray, to the Protector, August 28, 1547.

³ MS. Record of Privy-council of Scotland, sub annis 1546, 1547.

the remonstrances of the queen-dowager, it was affirmed that the former had been the aggressor:⁴ and not long after a force of five thousand English broke across the western Borders, plundered the country, made prisoner the Laird of Johnston, with others of his surname, and seized and garrisoned many of the towers upon the marches.⁵ To repel this aggression, which was loudly complained of as an open declaration of war, Arran assembled an army, advanced rapidly to the Borders, stormed and razed the castle of Langhope, and was about to pursue his advantage,⁶ when he received intelligence that a French fleet had entered the Firth, and required his co-operation in the bombardment of St Andrews. Nothing could be more welcome than this event. During the armistice, the garrison, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Knox and others, who, for conscience' sake, now acted with their party, had abandoned themselves to the most flagrant excesses, ravaging the country, and behaving in a brutal and licentious manner to the poor victims who fell into their hands.⁷ Trusting to the support of England, they had, on frivolous grounds, refused to abide by their agreement, when the Papal absolution arrived from Rome; and the governor, convinced that he had been the dupe of a convention which they had never meant to fulfil, was deeply incensed against them.

Hastening back, therefore, to the scene of action, he found in the bay a squadron of sixteen armed galleons, commanded by Leo Strozzi, prior of Capua, a knight of Rhodes, of great military experience. The vessels took up their line with much skill, so as at

⁴ Carte, vol. iii. p. 205. MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Queen-dowager to the Protector, 18th April 1547.

⁵ Journal of Occurrents, p. 43. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 867.

⁶ Journal of Occurrents, pp. 43, 44. MS. Records of Privy Seal, July 24, 1547. Letter to George, earl of Huntly, of the Gift of the Gudis of George, earl of Caithness. The army was summoned to assemble at Peebles, 10th July 1547.

⁷ Keith, p. 52. Knox's History, p. 83. Herries' Memoirs of the Reign of Mary, p. 17.

full tide completely to command the outworks towards the sea. The greater ordnance were landed, raised by engines and planted on the steeples of the abbey and St Salvator's college, which overlooked the inner court of the fortress; whilst some large battering mortars were dragged near the gates. During such preparations, the interior of the castle presented an extraordinary scene. Knox, disgusted by the licentiousness of the garrison, raised his awful voice, and denounced their speedy captivity as the just judgment of God. To the scoffs of the soldiers, who boasted of the strength of their towers and anticipated assistance from England, he declared that their sins had found them out, that their walls would shiver under the cannon, and their bodies be manacled in foreign prisons. Nor was the sentence long in finding its accomplishment. The fortifications which had resisted the ill-directed batteries of the Scottish governor, crumbled under the more effective cannonade of the Italian commander. A breach was soon effected; a proposal of the garrison for a sortie canvassed and abandoned as hopeless; and, within less than a week, a flag of truce was seen approaching. It brought from the besieged an offer to surrender, their lives and property being secured; but the condition was scornfully rejected by the governor and the queen. Strozzi declared that it was beyond his commission even to grant them their lives; and if he did so, it must be with reservation that it was afterwards approved of by the king his master. To this the garrison were compelled to submit. They would acknowledge no lawful authority in Scotland; the governor, they affirmed, had treacherously betrayed them, and their only transaction therefore should be with the King of France.¹ They were accordingly con-

veyed prisoners on board the fleet, the plunder of the castle was seized and divided by the victors; and Strozzi, by the advice of the governor, who dreaded it should fall into the hands of the English, dismantled the fortress, and levelled its defences with the ground. Others, however, ascribe its destruction to the zeal of fulfilling an injunction of the canon law, declaring the vengeance of extermination against any mansion that had witnessed the murder of a cardinal. The booty, which included the personal property of the prelate, amounted, in plate, copes, vestments, and jewels of great value, to a hundred thousand pounds, a prize which no doubt tempted the return of the French auxiliaries to Scotland. Beaton's death was now amply revenged, and Knox's predictions fulfilled; for the conspirators and their associates, on arriving in France, were partly distributed in the dungeons of various castles in Brittany; whilst others, including the reformer himself, were kept chained on board the galleys, and treated with the utmost rigour.²

With this success the governor was highly gratified. He already possessed Dumbarton, which the English had in vain attempted to recover; St Andrews, so lately an object of anxiety, and for the occupation of which the protector was making every effort, had now fallen; he had been partially successful in his enterprise upon the Bor-

account. The heads of the appointment, he affirms, were—1st, that their lives should be secured to them; 2d, that they should be safely conveyed to France; 3d, that if they chose to embrace the conditions proposed to them by the King of France, they should have their freedom, and be at liberty to enter his service; 4th, that if they refused, they should be conveyed, at the expense of France, to what country they chose, *except Scotland*. I have preferred the account of the terms of capitulation given in the text, as it appears best supported by the circumstances of the case; and it is confirmed not only by Anderson and Lesley, but partially by Buchanan, book xv. cap. 45—“Leonti Strozio, incolumitatem modo pacti, se dediderunt.” I have been thus particular, because an able author has stated that the terms of the capitulation were violated, (M'Crie's Life of Knox, p. 52,) of which I see no proof.

¹ Lesley, p. 194.

² Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii. pp. 94, 95. Lesley, p. 194. Anderson says expressly, “At length he [Strozzi] was content to pardon them their lives, if the King of France should think it good, else to stand to his pleasure.” Lesley, p. 194, repeats the same terms. Knox, in his History, gives a different

ders; and could he have succeeded in imparting a spirit of honour and unanimity to the great body of the nobility, there was little reason to be alarmed by the threatened invasion of England.

But a discovery was made in the castle which threw a gloom over all his sanguine anticipations. In the chamber of Balnaves, the agent of the Castilians, was found a register-book which contained the autograph subscriptions of two hundred Scottish noblemen and gentlemen, who had secretly bound themselves to the service of England. Amongst these were the Earls of Bothwell, Cassillis, and Marshal, with Lord Kilmars and Lord Gray. The noted Sir George Douglas, the brother of the Earl of Angus, had, it appeared, sent in his adherence by a secret messenger, whilst Bothwell had agreed to give up his castle of the Hermitage, and renounce all allegiance to the governor, for which service he was to receive in marriage the Duchess of Suffolk, aunt to the English monarch.¹ So much was apparent to the governor, but other disgraceful transactions were in progress of which he was ignorant. Lord Gray had not only himself forsaken his country, but was tampering with the Earls of Athole, Errol, Sutherland, and Crawford, whom he found well disposed to declare their mind, provided they were "honestly entertained." He accordingly advised that some money should be given them according to their good deserving.² Glencairn, at the same time, transmitted to the protector a secret overture of service, in which he declared himself ready to assist the King of England in the accomplishment of his purposes; to co-operate in the invasion with his friends and vassals, who were favourers of the Word of God; and to raise two thousand men, who should be ready either to join the army, or keep possession of Kyle,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Laird of Langton to the Protector Somerset, 18th August 1547.

² Lord Gray to the Protector Somerset, 28th August 1547. MS. Letter, State-paper Office.

Cunningham, and Renfrew. He also gave assurances of the devotion of Cassillis and Lennox to the same cause; requested money to equip a troop of horse, with which he would hold the governor in check till Somerset's arrival; and added directions for the fortification of some "notable strengths" on the east and west Borders, by which the whole country might be commanded to the gates of Stirling. It was to be expected that such offers would be highly welcome to the English government, although distrust must have been felt in dealing with persons whose oaths had been so repeatedly and unscrupulously violated. Not a year had elapsed since all these noble barons had solemnly given their adherence to the government of Arran, most of them had been appointed members of the privy-council, they had approved in parliament of the dissolution of the marriage, and peace with England; and they were now prepared to change sides once more, and promote the purposes of the protector. Even after such repeated falsehood their overtures were graciously accepted, and they received a pardon for their desertion of their agreement with the late king, under condition that they should perform its conditions in every respect to his son and successor.⁴ It is material to notice these terms, as they prove, on the one hand, that, under the cloak of marriage, Edward, like his father Henry, concealed a design for the subjugation of Scotland; and on the other, that the party who favoured this project were disposed to accomplish their purposes, although at the sacrifice of the independence of the country.⁵

The discovery of such intrigues

³ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 476. MS. Book of Privy-council, fol. 32, p. 2.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, entitled, Overture of Service and other Devices, by the Earl of Glencairn. These important facts, which are new to this portion of Scottish history, were found in the Original Letters and Overtures of the actors, preserved in the State-paper Office.

⁵ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 476. MS. Record of Privy-council, fol. iii.

placed the governor in an embarrassing situation. To defeat machinations which had spread so widely, required a union of resolution and talent which he did not possess : he was aware that the country was on the point of being invaded by the protector in person ; to have attempted to bring his enemies to justice might have thrown his preparations for resistance into confusion, and spread distrust and dismay throughout the people at a time when vigour and confidence were imperatively required. Either he ought to have pretended a total ignorance, silently taking the best measures to defeat the designs of his enemies ; or he should resolutely have seized the chief conspirators ; but Arran unfortunately adopted that middle course which was sure to lead to a calamitous result : he dissembled for the moment, and delayed all proceedings against the great body of his opponents, but he threw Bothwell into prison, and thus gave an opportunity to his associates of providing for their own safety.¹

Yet in the midst of this political irresolution he was not remiss in his military preparations. A line of beacons had been established during the summer upon the hills near the coast, making a chain of communication from St Abb's Head to Linlithgow ; horsemen were kept at each station to carry intelligence ; and it was proclaimed that no person should leave their habitations, or remove their goods, as the governor and noblemen of Scotland had determined to repel the invaders, and defend the realm, with the help of God, and at the hazard of their lives.²

On the 27th of August the protector arrived with his army at Newcastle, and at the same time a fleet of thirty-four ships of war and thirty transports, commanded by Lord Clinton, anchored off that port. The English force consisted in all of fourteen thousand two hundred men, of which four

thousand were men-at-arms and demi-lances, two thousand light horse, and two hundred Spanish carabiniers mounted. The remaining eight thousand were footmen and pioneers.³ This force was divided into three principal wards or battles. The vanguard was led by Dudley, earl of Warwick, afterwards the noted Duke of Northumberland, a captain of great experience and resolution, who had been bred to arms in the French wars of Henry the Eighth ; the main battle by the protector in person ; and the rear by Lord Dacre of the North, a veteran who still possessed all the fire and vivacity of youth. Each battle was strengthened by wings of horse, consisting of men-at-arms, demi-lances, hagbutteers, and some pieces of artillery, "every piece having its guard of pioneers to clear the way."⁴ Lord Grey of Wilton, high marshal of the army, commanded the cavalry, having under him Sir Francis Bryan, Sir Peter Mewtas, Sir Francis Fleming, master of the ordnance, and Don Pedro de Gamboa, who conducted a fine body of mounted Spanish carabiniers.

We have seen that, during the whole of the preceding year, the Scottish governor had been engaged in war, and being apprehensive that the people, fatigued with perpetual hostilities, might be remiss in obeying his summons, he adopted an expedient for assembling an army, which was seldom used except in cases of imminent peril. He sent the fiery cross throughout the country⁵—a warlike symbol of Celtic origin, constructed of two slender rods of hazel, formed into the shape of a cross, the extremities seared in the fire and extinguished when red and blazing in the blood of a goat, slain for the occasion. From this slight description, it is evident that the custom may be traced back to pagan times ; and it is certain that, throughout the Highland districts of the country, its summons, wherever

¹ MS. Accounts of Lord Treasurer, June 27, 1547.

² MS. Book of Privy-council, fol. 68, p. 2. Epistola Reg. Scot. vol. ii. p. 387.

³ Patten in Dalyel's Fragments of Scottish History, pp. xxv., xxvi.

⁴ Hayward in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 282.—Carte, vol. iii. p. 206.—Patten, p. 32.

⁵ Notes and Illustrations, letter D.

it was carried, was regarded with awe, and obeyed without hesitation. (Previous to this, we do not hear of its having been adopted in the Lowlands,) but on the present emergency, being fastened to the point of a spear, it was transmitted by the heralds and pursuivants throughout every part of the realm; from town to town, from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, the ensanguined symbol flew with astonishing rapidity; and such was its effect, that in a wonderfully short space of time an army of thirty-six thousand men assembled near Musselburgh.

The Duke of Somerset now entered Scotland, on the 2d of September 1547, and without interruption advanced along the coast, in sight of the English fleet, till he arrived at the defile, then called the Peaths, a deep ravine, over which at the present day is thrown the Pease Bridge.¹ It has been well described by Hayward as a "valley stretching towards the sea six miles in length, the banks of which were so steep on either side, that the passage across was not direct, but by paths leading slope-wise, which being many, the place is for that reason called the Peaths, or paths."² It was reported in the English host that the Scots were here prepared to resist the further advance of the English; and undoubtedly such was the advantage of the ground that, with even a small portion of military skill, a far inferior force might have discomfited their whole army; yet this opportunity was neglected—a circumstance which can only be accounted for by the fact that most of the proprietors of the country through which the enemy held their march were attached to the interests of the enemy. We know that in Henry Balnaves's register were the names of two hundred gentlemen, who were under promise to England; and when his army lay at Newcastle, the protector received a visit from the Laird of Mangertown, and forty barons of the east Borders, who tendered their services and were courteously received.³ The little obstruc-

tion which Somerset met during the whole course of his march may be thus explained.

Having employed the greatest part of a day in conducting the army, and dragging the artillery through this rugged pass, the duke made himself master of the neighbouring castles⁴ of Dunglass, Thornton, and Innerwick, and leaving Dunbar within a gunshot on his right, he pushed forward to East Linton, where the army crossed the Tyne by the narrow bridge which still remains, whilst the horsemen and carriages forded the river. Here the enemy neglected another excellent opportunity of attacking the English force when defiling across Linton Bridge. They contented themselves with pushing forward some of their prickers, or light horse, under Dandy Car, a noted Borderer, whose little squadron was put to flight by a charge led by Lord Warwick. Advancing past Hailes Castie, which opened upon them an ineffectual cannonade, they proceeded, on the 7th September, to Lang-Niddry, where they encamped for the night.⁵ Here the protector, communicating by signal with his fleet, which lay near Leith, Lord Clinton the admiral came ashore; and after a conference it was resolved that the larger ships should leave the road at Leith, and cast anchor beside Musselburgh, whilst the transports and victuallers should beat in as near as possible to the shore. The English were now aware that the Scottish army lay beside Musselburgh, and during the march of the succeeding day there were generally in view some small bodies of their light cavalry, which kept galloping backwards and forwards on the eminences overhanging their line of march.

On September the 8th, the protector halted for the night, and encamped near a town called Salt Preston, now Prestonpans, within view of the enemy's camp at Edmonstone Edge, about three miles distant. On his right to the north was the Firth, and towards the south, not far distant, rose the hill of Faside. Upon

¹ Situated in the north of Berwickshire.

² Hayward in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 281.

³ Patten's Expedition, p. 27.

⁴ These castles were in Haddingtonshire.

⁵ Patten's Expedition, p. 42.

the long elevated ridges which formed the roots of the hill the Scottish cavalry shewed themselves early next morning, and approached the English vanguard, whooping, shaking their lances, and attempting to provoke them to an onset. They formed a force of one thousand five hundred light horse, led by Lord Hume, and near them lay in ambush a body of five hundred foot. Somerset, however, from the forwardness of these prickers, suspected that they reckoned on some nearer support than was discernible, and gave strict orders to his men to preserve their ranks; but Lord Grey, impatient of such provocation, extorted leave to try the effect of a charge. Accordingly, as soon as they came, "scattered on the spur," within a stonecast of the English, and after their usual shouting, were beginning to wheel about, Grey with his demi-lances, and a thousand men-at-arms, charged them at full speed, upon which they faced about, and firmly received his onset. The weight of the men-at-arms, however, and their barbed steeds, were an overmatch for the slight, though hardy hackneys of the Borderers; and after maintaining the conflict for three hours, they were entirely broken, and the greatest part of them cut to pieces. The chase continued for three miles, from Faside hill to the right wing of their army, which lay to the south. In this unfortunate affair thirteen hundred men were slain within sight of their camp, Lord Hume was severely wounded, his son, the master of Hume, taken prisoner, and the whole body of the Scottish cavalry nearly destroyed,—a loss seriously felt in the next day's battle.¹

After this success the protector, accompanied by a small party, descended from Faside hill, by a lane which led directly north, to the church of Inveresk. His object was to examine the position occupied by the Scots; and he was enabled to do so effectually, as the course he took ran almost parallel to

their camp, which he could see distinctly. Nothing could be better chosen for strength and security than the ground whereon they lay: defended on the right by a morass which stretched towards the south, on the left by the Firth, and in front, looking eastward, by the river Esk, which took its course between them and the enemy. Over this river, to the north and near the Firth, was the bridge of Musselburgh, upon which they had placed their ordnance, so that it was evident to the English commander, upon a slight inspection, that if they chose to keep their position, it would be impossible to attack them with advantage, or bring them to a battle. Somerset, however, did not fail to observe that their camp was partially commanded by the hill of Inveresk, and by the higher parts of the lane which led from Faside hill; and having resolved to occupy these places with his ordnance, with the object of forcing them to dislodge from their strong ground, he rode back to his own camp.

On the road he was overtaken by a Scottish herald, with his tabard on, accompanied by a trumpeter, who brought a message from the governor. The herald said his first errand was for an exchange of prisoners, his second to declare that his master, eager to avoid the effusion of Christian blood, was willing to allow him to retreat without molestation, and upon honourable conditions. The trumpeter next addressed the duke, informing him that, in case such terms were not accepted, his master, the Earl of Huntly, willing to bring the quarrel to a speedy conclusion, was ready to encounter him twenty to twenty, ten to ten, or, if he would so far honour him, man to man. To these messages Somerset made a brief and temperate reply. He declared, turning to the herald, that his coming into Scotland had been at the first to seek peace, and to obtain such terms as should be for the good of either realm. His quarrel, he added, was just; he trusted, therefore, God would prosper it; and since the governor had already rejected such conditions as would never again be

¹ Patten. pp. 46, 47. Anderson's MS. History, p. 98. Hayward in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 282.

proffered, he must look now to its being decided by arms; "and as for thy master," said he, addressing the trumpeter, "he lacketh some discretion to send his challenge to one who, by reason of the weighty charge he bears, (no less than the government of a king's person and the protection of his realm,) hath no power to accept it; whilst there are yet many noble gentlemen here, his equals in rank, to whom he might have addressed his cartel, without fear of a refusal." At this moment the Earl of Warwick broke eagerly in, telling the messenger that he would not only accept the challenge, but would give him a hundred crowns if he brought back his master's consent.¹ "Nay," said Somerset, "Hunlty is not equal in rank to your lordship; but, herald, tell the governor, and the Earl of Hunlty also, that we have now spent some time in your country: our force is but a small company—yours far exceeds us; yet bring me word they will meet us in a plain field, and thou shalt have a thousand crowns for thy pains, and thy masters fighting enough."

The herald and his companion were then dismissed, and the protector pursued his way to the camp, where, after a consultation with his officers, it was thought proper, notwithstanding the challenge so lately given, to make a final effort to avert hostilities. A letter was accordingly addressed to the governor, in which Somerset declared his readiness to retreat from the kingdom on the single condition that the Scots would consent to keep their youthful queen in her own country, unfettered by any agreement with the French government, until she had reached a marriageable age, and was able to say for herself whether she would abide by the matrimonial treaty with England. Had such moderate and equitable proposals been made previous to the declaration of hostilities, they would probably have been accepted; but coming at so questionable a moment, they appeared to the governor to be dictated rather by a conviction in the protector, that he

could no longer support his army in an enemy's country, than by any real love of peace. On shewing the letter to Hamilton, archbishop of St Andrew's, who was much in his confidence, he expressed the same opinion; and it was agreed to suppress the communication entirely, whilst a report was spread that an insulting, instead of a conciliatory message had been transmitted, requiring the Scots to deliver up their queen, and submit themselves to the mercy of their enemy.²

Such being the result of this last attempt, nothing was left to either party but an appeal to arms; and early on the morning of the 10th of September, the Duke of Somerset broke up his camp, and gave orders for the army to advance towards the hill of Inveresk, his design being to encamp near that spot, and to plant his ordnance on the eminence commanding the Scottish position. This movement was no sooner perceived by the Scottish governor than he embraced the extravagant idea that the protector had commenced his retreat towards his fleet, which had removed two days before from Leith, and now lay in Musselburgh bay, with the design of embarking his army. He instantly resolved to anticipate him, by throwing himself between the English and their ships; and disregarding the advice of his best officers, who earnestly recommended him to keep his strong position till, at least, the demonstrations of the enemy became more definite, he gave orders for the whole army to dislodge and pass the river.³ Angus, who led the vanward, deeming it madness to throw away their advantage, refused to obey; but being charged on pain of treason to pass forward, he forded the river, and was followed, although after some delay, by the governor, who led the main battle, and the Earl of Hunlty with his northland men, who formed the rear. The advance mustered ten thousand strong, embracing the strength of Fife, Mearns, Angus, and the West

² Hayward in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 283

³ Maitland, vol. ii. p. 874. Hayward, 284.

Country; it was flanked on the right by some pieces of artillery drawn by men, and on the left by four hundred light horse; it included also a large body of priests and monks, who marched under a white banner, on which was painted a female kneeling before a crucifix, her hair dishevelled, and, embroidered underneath, the motto, "Afflictæ Ecclesiæ ne obliviscaris."¹

In the main battle was the power of Lothian, Fife, Strathern, Stirlingshire, and the great body of the barons of Scotland, having on the right wing the Earl of Argyle, with four thousand West Highlanders, and on the left the Islesmen, with Macleod, Macgregor, and other chieftains.² It was defended also on both flanks by some pieces of artillery, as was likewise the rear, but the guns were clumsily worked, and seem to have done little execution; whilst the Scots, though greatly superior in number, were inferior in military strength, from their having neither hagbutteers nor men-at-arms.

This movement of the Scots, in abandoning their advantage and crossing the river, was viewed with equal astonishment and pleasure by the English commander. He had dislodged from his camp, and commenced his march at eight in the morning; and before he was half way to Inveresk, the enemy, having surmounted the hill, were seen advancing towards the English. Somerset and the Earl of Warwick, who happened to be riding together at this moment, instantly perceived their advantage, thanked God for the fortunate event, ordered forward their artillery, and taking a joyful leave of each other, proceeded to their respective charges; the former to the vanward, and the duke to the main battle, where was the king's standard.³ Warwick immediately arranged his division upon the side of the hill; the protector formed his battle chiefly on the hill,

but his extreme right rested on the plain; the rear, under Lord Dacre, was drawn up wholly on the plain; whilst Lord Grey, with the men-at-arms and the mounted carabineers, were stationed at some distance on the extreme left. His orders were to take the enemy in flank, yet he was strictly interdicted from making any attack till the foot of the vanward were engaged with the enemy, and the main battle was near at hand for his support. By the time these arrangements were completed the Scots were considerably advanced, their object being to throw themselves between the English and their fleet; but in accomplishing this the wing of their rearward, which moved nearest to the Firth, found themselves exposed to the fire of one of the English galleys, which galled them severely, slew the Master of Graham, with some others who were beside him, and threw Argyle's Highlandmen into disorder.⁴ Checked in this manner, their army fell back from the ground which was thus exposed, and declining to the southward, took a direct line towards the west end of Faside hill.⁵ Their object was to win the side of the hill, and, availing themselves of the advantage, to attack the enemy from the higher ground; but as soon as the protector perceived this movement, he commanded Lord Grey and Sir Ralph Vane, with the veteran bands of the men-at-arms, called Bulleners,⁶ and the demi-lances under Lord Fitzwaters, to charge the right wing of the Scots, and if they could not break it, at least to keep it in check till their own vanward might advance further on the hill, and their centre and rear coming up, form a full front against the enemy. This manœuvre, although aware of its perilous nature, was executed by Lord Grey with the utmost readiness and gallantry. Observing the Scottish infantry advanc-

¹ This fact is stated both in the English and Scottish accounts of the battle, bat in walking over the field I found it extremely difficult to account for it.—See Patten, p. 55

² Ibid.

³ From their having been employed as the garrison at Boulogne.

¹ Hayward in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 286. Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii. p. 101.

² Pitscottie by Dalyel, vol. ii. p. 496.

³ Hayward in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 284.

ing at so round a pace, that many deemed them to be rather cavalry than foot,¹ he waited for a short space, till Lord Warwick was pretty well up with the enemy, and then, commanding the trumpets to sound, charged down the hill at full gallop, right against the left wing of Angus's division. The shock at first was dreadful, but the superiority of infantry over cavalry was soon evinced. The Scottish foot were armed with spears eighteen feet in length, far exceeding that of the lances of the men-at-arms, and they knew well how to avail themselves of this advantage. Angus, on observing the intention of the English, had commanded his men to form in that formidable order which had often effectually resisted the chivalry of England. Nothing could be more simple, but nothing more effective: the soldiers closed inwards, so near as to appear locked together shoulder to shoulder; the front line stooped low and almost knelt, placing the butt-end of their pike against the right foot, grasping it firmly with both hands, and inclining its steel point breast-high against the enemy; the second rank crossed their pikes over their shoulders; the third assumed the same position, and so on to whatever depth the column might be, giving it the appearance of a gigantic hedge-hog covered with an impenetrable skin of steel bristles.² Against such a body, if the men stood firm, the finest cavalry in the world could not make any serious impression. It happened, also, that a broad muddy ditch or slough lay between the English and the Scottish foot, into which the horses plunged up to the counter, and with great difficulty cleared it. Yet, undismayed by these adverse circumstances, Lord Grey, heading his men-at-arms, struggled through, and with his front companies charged full upon the enemy's left. No human force, however, could break the wall against which he had

thrown himself; and in an incredibly short time two hundred saddles were emptied, the horses being stabbed in the belly with the spears, and the riders who had fallen speedily despatched by the *whingers*, or short double-edged daggers, which the Scots carried at their girdle. Such was the fate of Shelly, Ratcliff, Clarence, Preston, and other brave and veteran commanders of the Bulleners. Flammock, who carried the English standard, saved the colours, but left the staff in the hands of the enemy.³ Lord Grey himself was dangerously hurt in the mouth and neck. Many horses, furious from their wounds, and plunging in their agony, carried disorder into their own companies; and such was soon the inextricable confusion into which the whole body of the men-at-arms was thrown, that a portion of them, breaking away, fled through the ranks of their own division, whilst Lord Grey had the greatest difficulty in extricating the rest, and retreating up the hill with their shattered and wounded remains. At this critical moment, had Angus been supported by the rest of the army, or had the Scots possessed any body of men-at-arms, who by a timely charge might have improved their advantage, the English would in all probability have been undone.⁴ But the cavalry had been nearly cut to pieces in the action of the day before, and the centre and rear, under the governor and Huntly, were still at a considerable distance; the vanward, therefore, unable to pursue the fugitives, and not choosing to advance against the main body of the enemy till certain of support, halted for a brief space. The opportunity was thus lost, and the Earl of Warwick, aware of the infinite value of a few minutes gained at such a juncture, galloped through the wavering ranks of the advance, re-established their order, disengaged the men-at-arms from the infantry, and rallying them, with the assistance of Sir Ralph Sadler, pushed forward the company of the Spanish carabin-

¹ Patten, p. 56.

² So that it were as easy, to use the words of an eye-witness, for a bare finger to pierce the skin of an angry hedge-hog, as for any one to encounter the brunt of their pikes.—Patten, p. 59.

³ Lord Herries' Memoirs, p. 20.

⁴ Hayward in Kenevet, vol. ii. p. 284. Patten, pp. 61, 62, 65.

ers. These fine troops, armed both man and horse in complete mail, galloped up to the brink of the broad ditch, and, coming within half-musket range, discharged their pieces full in the faces of the Scottish infantry.¹ This attack was seconded by Sir Peter Mewtas, who brought up his foot hagbutteers: the archers, now moving rapidly forward, discharged a flight of arrows; and at the same moment the artillery, which had been judiciously placed on the hill, were made to bear upon Angus's division, who, dreading the effect of so complicated an attack, began to fall back, though in good order, to the main battle. At this instant the Highlanders, who, unable to resist their plundering propensities, were dispersed over the field stripping the slain, mistook this retrograde movement for a flight, and seized with a sudden panic, began to run off in all directions. Their terror communicated itself to the burgh troops: these formed a main portion of the centre, and, starting from their ranks, although still a quarter of a mile distant from the enemy, they threw away their weapons and followed the Highlanders. In the midst of this shameful confusion the governor, instead of exerting himself to rally the fugitives, shouted "Treason," a cry which only increased the disorder. The Earl of Warwick meanwhile was coming fast forward, the horsemen once more shewed themselves ready to charge, and the English centre and rear hastened on at an accelerated pace. Had the Scottish vanward been certain that support was near at hand, they might, even alone, have withstood this formidable attack; but, deserted by the rest of the army, they did not choose to sacrifice themselves; and the body which so lately had opposed an impenetrable front to the enemy beginning first to undulate to and fro, like a steely sea agitated by the wind, after a few moments was seen breaking into a thousand fragments and dispersing in all directions. Everything was now lost: the ground over which the flight lay was as thickly strewed with pikes

as a floor with rushes; helmets, bucklers, swords, daggers, and steel caps, lay scattered on every side, cast away by their owners, as impeding their speed; and the chase, beginning at one o'clock, continued till six in the evening with extraordinary slaughter. The English demi-lances and men-at-arms, irritated by their late defeat, hastened after the fugitives with a speed heightened by revenge,² and passing across the field of their late action, were doubly exasperated by seeing the bodies of their brave companions, stript by the Highlanders, lying all naked and mangled before their eyes. Crying to one another to remember Peniel Heugh, the spot where Sir Ralph Eure and his company had, in a former year,³ been cut to pieces by the Earl of Angus, they spurred at the top of their speed after the fugitives, cutting them down on all sides, and admitting none to quarter but those from whom they hoped for a heavy ransom. The Scots fled in three several ways—some straight upon Edinburgh, some along the coast to Leith, but the most part towards Dalkeith—with the object of throwing the morass, which had defended the right of their camp, between them and their pursuers.⁴ Yet this proved so ineffectual a security, that, before the chase was ended, fourteen thousand were slain, the river running red with blood, and the ground for five miles in distance and four in breadth being covered, says an eye-witness, as thick with dead bodies as cattle in a well-stocked pasture field.⁵ It was recorded, that in Edinburgh alone this day's battle made three hundred and sixty widows.⁶ Little pity was shewn to the priests, multitudes of whom were slain,⁷ and found mingled amongst the dead bodies of the common soldiers, whilst their sacred banner lay trampled under foot and soiled with blood.

The evening was now advancing to night, the pursuit had lasted for five

¹ Patten, p. 66.

² In 1554. *Supra*, p. 29.

³ Patten, p. 66.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 67.

⁵ Herries' *Memoirs*, p. 21.

⁶ Patten, p. 72.

hours, and the protector causing a retreat to be sounded, the army mustered again on the ridge of Edmonstone Edge, beside the Scottish tents, where, joyous at their victory, they gave a long loud shout, which, as they afterwards were told, was so shrill and piercing, that it was heard in the streets of the capital.¹

This great defeat, named from the adjoining fields the battle of Pinkie, if immediately followed up by Somerset, might have led to results most fatal to Scotland. Had he pursued the fugitive governor to Stirling, where the young queen was kept; made himself master of its castle, which could not have held out long against such a force as he commanded; occupied Edinburgh, seized and fortified the town and harbour of Leith, and after leaving a garrison to defend it, taken his progress through the country, and offered a general protection to the Scots, the consequences must have been eminently hazardous. But providentially for Scotland, the protector at this moment received information of secret plots against him in England; and he resolved to hurry home, that he might confront and defeat his enemies. His measures, in consequence of this abrupt decision, were confused and ill-digested. Their cruelty alienated the minds of the people, and their impolicy shook the confidence of the Scottish barons who were attached to his service. Advancing from Edgebuckling Brae where he had encamped after the battle, to Leith, he quartered his horse in the town; ravaged the neighbouring country; received the submission of the Earl of Bothwell, whom the governor had released from prison;² burnt Kinghorn, with some petty fishing ports upon the coast of Fife, and garrisoned a deserted monastery upon Inchcolm, a small island in the Firth. He next spoiled the abbey of Holyrood, from which he tore off the leaden roof; set fire to Leith; and having remained no longer than a week, commenced his retreat on the

18th September 1547.³ The fleet at the same time weighed anchor, and in their passage homeward took possession of the strong castle of Broughty, situated at the mouth of the Tay, which, by the treachery of Lord Gray, its owner, was, on the first summons, delivered to the enemy.⁴ It was newly fortified and garrisoned, after which Clinton returned with his navy to England. During the retreat of Somerset through the Merse and Teviotdale he received the submission of the chief men of these districts, who swore fealty to King Edward, and surrendered their castles to the protector. Amongst these were the Lairds of Cessford, Ferniehurst, Ormiston, Melsterain, and many others. He then seized and garrisoned the strong castle of Hume, and repaired Roxburgh, building a new fort upon the site of the old castle. For the speedy completion of this he was so earnest, that he put his own hand to the spade and shovel, encouraging his lords and officers to the like exertions, so that within a few days it was ready to receive a garrison.⁵

While still at this place intelligence reached the army of the success of the Earl of Lennox and Lord Wharton, who, two days before the battle, had entered Scotland by the west marches at the head of a body of five thousand men. The object was to create a diversion in these parts, and prevent them from sending their force to join the main army of Scotland. In this inroad they took Castlemilk, giving it in charge to Sir Edward Dudley; wasted the country with fire and sword; and razed to the ground the town of Annan, blowing up the church and steeple, where a brave officer named Lyon, with the Master of Maxwell and the Lairds of Johnston and Cockpool, made a desperate defence,

³ Lesley, Hist., pp. 200, 201. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 45.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Lord Clinton, Andrew Dudley, &c., to the Lord Protector, 24th Sept. 1547.

⁵ Anderson, MS. Hist., vol. ii. pp. 106, 107 Stevenson's Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary. Sir E. Dudley to the Earl of Shrewsbury, 11th Sept. 1547-8, p. 24.

¹ Patten, p. 71.

² Anderson, MS. Hist., vol. ii. p. 106.

and were permitted to retire with their lives.¹ In consequence of this success the whole of Annandale was struck with such terror, that it submitted to England, the Borderers swearing allegiance to Edward, and giving pledges for their fidelity.² Of these advantages, however, Somerset neglected to avail himself; and whilst such was his impolitic conduct, the measures on the part of the Scots, who still remained true to their allegiance, were prompt and decisive. The cruelty of the slaughter at Pinkie, and the subsequent severities at Leith, excited universal indignation; and the idea that a free country was to be compelled into a pacific matrimonial alliance, amid the groans of its dying citizens and the flames of its seaports, was revolting and absurd. The queen-mother, a woman of much spirit and political talent, seized the opportunity to infuse vigour and decision into the national councils. Meeting the governor, who immediately after his defeat had hurried to Stirling, she assembled the nobility around her, and proposed that a new army should be levied, whilst ambassadors should be despatched to France with a request for instant assistance. As the enemy still occupied Leith, the infant queen, for the sake of security, was conveyed from Stirling to the monastery of Inchmahome, situated in a little island in the lake of Menteith, where she remained with her governors, Lords Erskine and Livingston, till the retreat of the protector.³ Immediately after that event, however, a council was held by the governor and the queen-dowager at Stirling, in which it was determined, that as the education of the young queen could not be conducted with any safety or advantage in a country exposed to daily war, she should be sent to the court of France. D'Osell, the French ambassador, assured the nobility that no more likely method could be adopted to secure the speedy assistance of his

master; and finding the proposal agreeable to them, the queen-mother suggested that the French dauphin, under the circumstances in which the kingdom was now placed, would be an infinitely more appropriate match for their queen, when she arrived at a marriageable age, than the English monarch, whose hand had been so rudely forced upon her. This scheme could not fail to be disagreeable to Arran the governor, who had designed her for his own son; but his influence was on the wane; and although nothing definitive was settled, the ambassadors to the French court were permitted to sound the inclinations of Henry the Second, who eagerly embraced the overture.⁴

Although the resolute measures adopted by the queen-dowager, and the retreat of Somerset, supported in some degree the spirit of the country, it was scarcely to be expected that, under the circumstances in which Scotland stood, the struggle against England could be much longer continued. The land was shamefully deserted by the greater part of its nobility.⁵ The Earls of Angus, Glencairn, Cassillis, and Lennox; the Lords Maxwell, Boyd, Gray, and Cranston; the Lairds of Ormiston and Brunston, with many other barons, had entered the service of England, given hostages for their fidelity, and sworn to secret articles which bound them to obey the orders of the protector.⁶ On the side of the queen, indeed, Argyle, at this time one of the most powerful barons in Scotland, had advanced (January 1547-8) at the head of a large force to Dundee, with the determination of

¹ Lesley, p. 204. MS. Letter, B. C. State-paper Office, Glencairn to the Protector, 23d Oct. 1547. Also, MS. Letter, Lord Grey to the Protector, with the enclosure, 31st Oct. 1547. Same to the same, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 16th Nov. 1547. MS. Letter, B. C., Grey to the Protector, with news from Scotland, 24th Nov. 1547.

² See Notes and Illustrations, letter E.

³ Lord Grey to the Protector, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 20th Oct. 1547; also MS. Letter, B. C. Glencairn to Lord Wharton, 23d Oct. 1547; also MS. Letter, 3d Oct. 1547, Kirkpatrick of Closeburn to Lord Wharton, State-paper Office B. C.: also MS. Letter, 18th Oct. 1547, Grey to the Protector, State-paper Office, B. C.

¹ Anderson, MS. Hist., vol. ii. p. 111. MS. Letter, State-paper Office. The Earl of Lennox and Lord Wharton to the Protector, Carlisle, Sept. 16, 1547.

² Anderson, MS. Hist., p. 111.

³ Lesley. Bannatyne edit. p. 200.

making himself master of Broughty castle, and compelling the English to abandon that part of the country.¹ A seasonable bribe, however, of one thousand crowns caused an immediate and discreditable change of purpose; and, imitating the example of his brethren, he embraced the service of England and retired from Dundee,² (5th February 1547-8.) Bothwell, whose power was great upon the marches, vacillated alternately between the one party and the other; Huntly, the main stay of the Catholics, who had been taken prisoner at Pinkie, was allowed to proceed to Newcastle on a solemn engagement to further the views of Edward. Lord Maxwell, another of the prisoners, unscrupulously imitated his example; and Sir George Douglas, the ablest and most unprincipled of the party, not only signed the secret articles, but communicated a plan for an invasion, by which the whole country might be brought in a short time under the subjection of England.³ With such men, however, no promises or oaths were held sacred; and, extraordinary as it may appear, to those barons who had selfishly and basely engaged with the enemy, Scotland at this time owed her preservation. On the 18th of February 1547-8, Lord Wharton assembled the power of the western marches; he was joined by the Earl of Lennox, who commanded the Scottish Borderers in the service of England; and, according to their agreement, he expected to be strengthened by the whole

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir And. Dudley to the Protector, 27th Dec. 1547.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 5th Feb. 1547-8, Sir And. Dudley to the Protector. Ibid. Lord Gray of Scotland to the Protector, 7th Feb. 1547-8. The first being a receipt of Grey for a thousand crowns to be paid to Argyle; the second stating "that Argyle's mind is wonderfully given to further the king's godly purpose." MS. Letter, Feb. 15, 1547-8. Thomas Wharton to the Protector, State-paper Office, B. C.

³ Grey to the Protector, 20th Oct. 1547, MS. Letter, State-paper Office. MS. Letter, 21st Nov. 1547, Lord Grey to the Protector. MS. Letter, 31st Oct. 1547, Lord Grey to the Protector; also 24th Nov. 1547, Lord Grey to the Protector; also, 20th March 1547-8, Lord Huntly to the Protector; also, Grey to the Protector, 20th Oct. 1547; also, B. C., 15th Nov. 1547, Lord Wharton to the Protector.

power of the Douglases, and the Master of Maxwell, who held the chief command in these parts. Maxwell, however, after having given pledges to England, was bribed to desert his agreement, by a promise that he should marry the heiress of Terregles, a rich ward of the governor's; and Angus, notwithstanding his near connexion with Lennox, deserted him. On his advance Wharton found in his allies, to use his own expressive phrase, "an accustomed fashion of untruth." The Scottish earl made his appearance, but afterwards escaped to his own men; and, enraged at this breach of promise, Wharton determined to waste the country and take vengeance on such treachery. Incautiously dividing his little army, which consisted of three thousand men, he sent forward the cavalry under his son Henry, and himself followed with the foot. But scarce had he proceeded a few miles through a wild and wasted country, when he was attacked and entirely routed by the Earl of Angus.⁴ The Scottish lord had first dispersed the party in advance; and the "assured"⁵ Scots under the Master of Maxwell, who composed a considerable portion of the English force, no sooner saw the day likely to turn against their employers, than following the example shewn at Ancrum, they tore away their red crosses and slaughtered their allies without honour or mercy.⁶ Yet, although successful, it was a dear-bought victory to the Scots, six hundred being slain or drowned in the river Nith, and many of the principal barons made prisoners in a charge of cavalry, which checked the triumph of the enemy, though it could not restore the day. Wharton, after making extraordinary

⁴ MS. Letter, 15th Nov. 1547, State-paper Office, B. C., Lord Wharton to the Protector. Ibid., 18th Feb. 1547-8, the same to the Protector. MS. Letter, Ibid., Lord Wharton to the Protector, Lochmaben, 21st Feb. 1547-8. Ibid., B. C. MS. Letter, 23d February 1547-8. Thomas Wharton to the Protector.

⁵ The assured Scots were those who had entered into bands or covenants with England.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B. C., 23d February, 1547-8, Carlisle. Thomas Wharton to the Protector.

efforts, by which he extricated himself from his perilous embarrassment, retreated with the remnant of his force to Carlisle,¹ and Lord Grey, who at the same time had pushed forward to Haddington, was compelled by the news of this severe reverse to retire to Berwick. He had been joined by the Lairds of Ormiston, Brunston, and many of the barons of Lothian, to the number of one thousand horse; their houses, on his precipitate retreat, were sacked by the governor; and in one noted instance Arran hanged every man in the garrison which held out against him.² This impolitic cruelty drew after it a stern and terrible retaliation. Pledges, as we have seen, had been given by the Scots in the English service as hostages for their fidelity, and amongst these were many young and noble youths. Lord Wharton, smarting under his defeat, and exasperated by the desertion of Maxwell and the assured Scots, held a court for the trial of the pledges, at the "Moot Hill," beside Carlisle, and condemned ten to be hanged: four of these were instantly executed, amidst the tears and lamentations of their friends, who vainly implored delay; six were respite, whilst some priests and friars, who had been caught in the Scottish army, were dragged along with halters round their necks, and threatened to be tied up to the nearest trees.³

In the midst of these difficulties, when the governor, despairing of foreign assistance, was about to give up the contest, the conduct of the queen-mother deserved much praise. Upon the retreat of the protector, she brought back the young queen from the monastery of Inchmahome to the castle of Dumbarton, and took imme-

¹ Earl of Lennox and Lord Wharton to the Protector, 25th February 1547-8. MS. Letter, State-paper Office.

² MS. Letter, Grey to the Protector, 23d Feb. 1547-8, State-paper Office; also 27th Feb. 1547-8, Grey to the Protector, State-paper Office; and same to the same, 1st March 1547-8, State-paper Office.

³ MS. Letter, Lennox and Wharton to the Protector, 25th Feb. 1547-8, State-paper Office; also Wharton to the Protector, 18th March 1547-8, State-paper Office, B. C.

diate steps for transporting her into France.⁴

Alarmed by so decisive a measure, the protector determined to make an attempt at conciliation, and some months after his retreat addressed a manifesto to the governor,⁵ in which he disclaimed all views of subjugating the realm, or subverting the government of Scotland. His only object, he declared, was, by marriage, to unite the two kingdoms upon a footing of perfect equality; and he desired that the names of England and Scotland, which had for so many centuries been arrayed in mortal hostility against each other, should henceforth be sunk under the common appellation of Britain.⁶ These advances, however, came too late; and having been disregarded by the governor Lord Grey, at the head of a powerful force, once more entered the country; carried his ravages through the Merse and Mid-Lothian up to the gates of the capital; razed Dalkeith and Musselburgh; took and fortified Lauder and Haddington; and after leaving in the last place a strong garrison, returned to England.⁷ This expedition was rendered remarkable by the taking of the castle of Dalkeith, the stronghold of the crafty and able leader, George Douglas; who, after his old fashion, represented himself as favourably inclined to England. In accomplishing his purpose the English commander imitated his own cunning. "I pretended no manner of enmity against him," (I use his own words, in a letter to the protector,) "but that still I had hope of his conversion, to breed in him such trust, that the less doubting, the sooner I might be revenged or get him into my hands." Trusting to these assurances, the Scottish baron lay secure, as he believed,

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B. C. 27th Feb. 1547-8, Lord Grey to the Protector. Ibid., 4th March 1547-8, a Scottish Spy to Lord Wharton.

⁵ Dated February 5, 1547-8.

⁶ Carte, vol. iii. p. 222.

⁷ Diurnal of Occurrents, pp. 46, 47. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Grey to the Protector, 23d April 1548. Also, MS. Letter, same to same, 12th June 1548. Ibid.

in his castle; whilst Gamboa, a Spanish leader in the service of England, and sixty mounted hagbutteers, scoured and burnt the country in his neighbourhood; but before the least intelligence could reach him, Captain Wilford, with six hundred foot and one hundred horse, had crossed the Esk, and pushing forward his advance, summoned the castle. Even then Douglas boldly encountered him at the head of his pikemen. By superiority of numbers, however, he was driven back through a postern. The English gained the base court after a desperate struggle, in which forty of the Scots were slain; and Wilford was proceeding to undermine and blow up the walls, when the garrison yielded without conditions. Much wealth was found in the place, as, according to Grey's account, "all the country had brought their goods together, thinking that nothing could prevail against George's policy."¹ He himself escaped; but his wife, his eldest son, the Master of Morton, afterwards regent, the Abbot of Arbroath, a natural son of Angus, Home, the laird of Wedderburn, and many of the Douglases, fell into the hands of the enemy. To be thus overreached and entrapped in his own devices was peculiarly mortifying to this long-practised intriguer, and seems to have sunk deeper into his spirit than the loss either of his wife or his castle.

Meanwhile the governor had been repulsed in an attempt against Broughty fort; and the chief citizens of Dundee, amongst whom the doctrines of the Reformation were making great progress, declared for England.² Many of the leading Scottish barons had already, as we have seen, signed articles of submission to the protector;³ and so successful was Wharton, that six thousand men had bound themselves to join his force, giving

¹ MS. Letter, Grey to the Lord Protector. State-paper Office, June 4, 1548.

² They offered to hold their town against all the efforts of the governor, and, in return, requested some good preacher to be sent them, with a supply of English bibles and other godly books. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Dudley to the Protector, Nov. 1, 1547.

³ Lord Grey to the Protector, 20th October 1547. State-paper Office.

hostages for their fidelity.⁴ Under these circumstances, we can scarcely be surprised that the people, worn out by the continuance of war, and the ravages of the plague which now desolated the country, were on the point of falling into despair. At such a time, therefore, it was with no ordinary feelings upon the part not only of the queen-mother and her friends, but of the nation, that a French fleet was seen to enter the Firth, and an army of six thousand foreign troops soon after disembarked at Leith (16th June).⁵ It was commanded by Andrew de Montalembert Sieur D'Essé, an experienced officer; and, besides an excellent train of artillery, included three thousand Germans under the Rhinegrave, and a body of Italians led by the two Strozzi's, Leo, prior of Capua, and Peter, his brother, captain-general of the galleys. Arran instantly joined them with a force of five thousand men; and after a few days spent in consultation, the united armies invested Haddington, whilst a parliament assembled (17th July) in the abbey beside the town.⁶ At this meeting of the three estates, Monsieur D'Essé brought from his royal master an affectionate assurance of his anxiety to assist his allies in defence of their independence against, what he termed, the cruelty and arrogance of England. He declared he was ready, in addition to the army now sent, to grant them every further aid that might be necessary, in troops, money, and arms; and he concluded by expressing the anxiety of the French monarch that the league, which for so many centuries had bound the nations to each other, should now be further strengthened by a marriage between his son, the dauphin, and their youthful queen,⁷ whose education, if they would commit her to his

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B. C., Wharton to the Protector, Carlisle, November 12, 1547.

⁵ De Thou, book v. p. 250. See Notes and Illustrations, letter F.

⁶ Lesley, pp. 207-209. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Grey to the Protector, June 19, 1548. Ibid., July 14, 1548, Lord Wharton to the Protector.

⁷ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 481, 482.

charge, he would superintend with the utmost care and affection. To these proposals the Scottish parliament unanimously agreed, under the single condition that the French monarch should solemnly promise to preserve the laws and liberties of the realm of Scotland as they had existed under the race of her own kings. Measures were immediately adopted for the passage of the infant queen to France; and as it was known that the protector, aware of the design, had sent Clinton with a fleet to intercept her, great caution was used in the preparations.

Monsieur Villegagnon, with four galleys, weighing anchor from Leith, pretended to sail for France, but on clearing the mouth of the Firth, he changed his course, and passing through the Pentland Firth round Scotland, came before Dumbarton,¹ where the queen awaited his arrival. Mary, who was now a beautiful infant in her sixth year, was delivered by her mother to Monsieur de Brézé, who conveyed her on board the royal galley.² She was accompanied by her governors, the Lords Erskine and Livingston, and by the Lord James, her natural brother, afterwards the regent Moray, then a youth in his seventeenth year; whilst along with her embarked her four Marys, children of a like name and age with herself, selected as her playmates from the families of Fleming, Beaton, Seton, and Livingston.³ Scarce had she embarked when the English admiral, with his fleet, was seen off St Abb's Head; but setting sail about the 7th of August, the little squadron with its royal freight escaped every danger, and cast anchor in the harbour of Brest on the 13th of August 1548. From this place the young queen took her progress to the palace of St Germain, where she was joyfully received

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 29th July 1548, Brede to the Protector. Lesley, p. 209. Bannatyne edit. Lord Herries' Memoirs, p. 23.

² See Notes and Illustrations, letter G.

³ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 47. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Grey to the Protector, 4th August 1548.

by the French monarch, and an honourable court and household appointed for her at the public expense.⁴ Having completed these arrangements, Henry directed his ambassador, Monsieur de Selves, to inform the protector and his council that, as father of the dauphin, the affianced husband of the Scottish queen, and to whom the estates of her realm had already given the investiture of the kingdom, he had taken Scotland under his protection, and considered it as included in the peace between France and England. He required him, therefore, to abstain from all hostilities against that country, and promised that a like cessation should be observed by the Scots.⁴

It was not to be expected that this intimation should produce any effect, and the war continued with equal animosity as before; but at first the success was on the side of England. Haddington held out against every effort of the foreign troops; and although a body of one thousand five hundred English horse, who escorted a supply of ammunition, were defeated with great slaughter, such was the bravery of the garrison under Sir James Wilford, that the siege was first turned into a blockade, and afterwards abandoned on the approach of the Earl of Shrewsbury at the head of an army of twenty-two thousand men. To co-operate with the land troops, a fleet under Lord Clinton appeared in the Firth, and making a descent at St Monans, on the coast of Fife, were encountered and defeated with great slaughter by the Laird of Wemyss, assisted by the Lord James,⁵ who, on the first intelligence of danger, had mustered the strength of Fife, and here first gave a proof of that cool and determined character which afterwards raised him to such a height of power.⁶ To balance this success, however, Haddington was fully supplied, and its garrison strengthened by four

⁴ Lesley, p. 210.

⁵ Mémoires D'Estat, par Ribier, vol. ii. p. 152. Carte, vol. iii. p. 223.

⁶ Lord Herries' Memoirs, p. 24. Carte, vol. iii. p. 223.

⁷ Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii. p. 122, dorso.

hundred horse; Dunbar was burnt, Dundee taken, a strong fort raised at Broughty,¹ which overawed the country, another begun at Dunglas, and a force of three thousand German troops encamped in the neighbourhood to complete the work, and reduce that district.²

On the retreat, however, of Shrewsbury to England, affairs began to assume a different aspect, and the tide of success soon turned completely in favour of the Scots and their foreign allies. The war, too, assumed a character of more than common ferocity.³ The Scots, not contented with the slaughter of the captives who fell into their hands, purchased their English prisoners from the French, that they might have the gratification of subjecting them to the most ingenious and protracted kinds of death. Of such excesses, disgraceful as they undoubtedly were, the causes were to be found in the conduct of the English themselves. The cruel slaughter at Pinkie,⁴ the burning their seaports and shipping, the destruction of their harvest, and the pitiless severity with which the repeated invasions of the country had been accompanied, had at length animated the Scots with a universal feeling of revenge, which manifested itself in the most shocking excesses: one example of such scenes may be given as illustrating the times. Ferniehirst castle, on the east Borders, had submitted to the English; it was strongly garrisoned, and the commandant and his soldiers had made themselves obnoxious to the common people by many shameful excesses of rapine and licentiousness. Siege was laid to it by the Scottish and foreign troops; the base court was gained, the English archers were driven by the fire of the hagbutteers into the keep, and the engineers had effected a breach in the inner wall, when the commander, afraid of falling into the hands of the

¹ It was called the Brakehill, MS. Privy-seal, 1548-9, February 3.

² Lesley, pp. 211, 212, 214-16. Carte, vol. iii. pp. 222, 223.

³ Notes and Illustrations, letter H.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 19th Oct. 1540. Mason to the Privy-council.

Scots, stole forth, and surrendered to the Sieur D'Essé, imploring his protection; but it was in vain: a Borderer beholding in him the brutal ravisher of his wife, broke through every impediment, and, ere his arm could be arrested, at one blow carried his head four paces from his body.⁵

The English had repaired and garrisoned the ruinous fortress of Roxburgh immediately subsequent to the battle of Pinkie; the chiefs on the east Border had sworn allegiance to the protector, and the west Borderers submitted universally to Lord Wharton; but the submission which had been extorted by fear was, on the first success of the foreign troops, exchanged for the bitterest hostility; and in a short space of time the country which had been occupied by the enemy was wrested from their hands. The castle of Hume was re-taken; the governor of Haddington, Sir James Wilford, made prisoner, and the party he commanded entirely defeated; the German garrison, which had been left in Coldingham, were cut to pieces; the enemy expelled from their fortifications in Inchkeith, the important strength of Fast castle recovered by stratagem; and the English at length compelled to abandon Haddington, the defence of which had cost them so much blood and treasure.⁶ But the employment of foreign troops generally brings some calamity along with it: if successful, they insist on a monopoly of the glory; if defeated, they throw the blame upon their employers, and in either case jealousy and heartburnings arise. These causes seem to have operated to their full extent during the campaigns of the French in Scotland, and at last broke out in a tumult in the capital, which was only appeased after the death of the Laird of Stenhouse, the provost, and the slaughter of many of the citizens.⁷

In the course of these transactions a reinforcement of a thousand foot and three hundred horse arrived from France,⁸ under the command of De

⁵ Lesley, p. 224.

⁶ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 49. Lesley, pp. 231, 232.

⁷ Lesley, pp. 217, 218. ⁸ June 23. 1542.

Thermes, an experienced officer, who prosecuted the war with such vigour and ability that the English were everywhere defeated, and compelled at last to surrender the castle of Broughty, their strongest remaining fortress in Scotland.¹ Having obtained this advantage, the governor laid siege to Lauder, and in a successful attack had already driven the enemy into the inner court, when intelligence was brought that peace had been concluded at Boulogne between France and England, upon which hostilities were immediately suspended.² It was found that the French monarch had stipulated very favourable terms for his allies. The English agreed to evacuate Scotland;³ to demolish the forts which they had raised at Dun-glas, Roxburgh, and Eyemouth; to surrender Lauder; and to abstain from any invasion, unless upon some new provocation.⁴ To these conditions the governor lost no time in giving in his adherence, sending the Master of Erskine as his ambassador into France for that purpose,⁵ and peace was proclaimed at Edinburgh in the month of April 1550.⁶

Thus after a war of nine years were the English obliged to abandon their extravagant projects of compelling the Scots, by force of arms, into a matrimonial alliance. Had their measures been more judicious, and the mode of courtship less boisterous, the match, under due restrictions, might have proved acceptable to the governor, the nobles, and the common people; but the violence of the protector defeated his object, threw his enemy into the arms of France, and rendered the breach between the two nations still wider than before.

To the queen-mother nothing could be more acceptable than this successful termination of hostilities. The betrothing of the infant queen to the dauphin, the brilliant successes of the foreign troops, and the terms of the

peace, established the ascendancy of the French interest, and gave Henry the Second an influence in the management of Scottish affairs, of which she now resolved to avail herself. She had long been dissatisfied with the conduct of the governor; and, instigated alike by her own ambition and the advice of her brothers, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal Lorraine, she formed the bold design of supplanting him in the possession of the supreme power. To accomplish this by force was impossible. Towards the conclusion of the war the people and the nobles had become jealous of the French auxiliaries;⁷ the feeling was increased by the obligations which they owed to them, and the slightest appearance of compulsion employed towards Arran would have roused a spirit of universal opposition. Mary of Guise determined to gain her purpose by the more artful weapons of intrigue and bribery: she knew the venality of the Scottish nobles, she was familiar with the timid and irresolute character of the governor, and she did not despair so to manage matters that he should at length be reduced to save himself from increasing unpopularity by a voluntary admission of the regency.

Her first step towards the prosecution of these views was to repair to the court of France: her ostensible object being a visit to her daughter; her real purpose to obtain the advice and co-operation of the French monarch.⁸ In the month of September, Strozzi, prior of Capua, brought a small squadron of French ships to anchor at Newhaven,⁹ and the queen-

⁷ Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary, pp. 30, 31. Thomas Fisher to the Protector, Oct. 11, 1548. Some minute and interesting particulars of the war in Scotland, and the conduct of the French auxiliaries under D'Essé and De Thermes, will be found in the above valuable volume of original letters (the contribution of Mr Kirkman Finlay to the Maitland Club.) See also in the same volume, p. 36, Letter from Sir Thomas Holcroft to the Lord Protector Somerset, 24th July 1549, pp. 36, 39; also same to same, 25th September 1549.

⁸ Notes and Illustrations, letter I.

⁹ A small fishing village on the Firth of Forth, to the north of Edinburgh.

¹ Lesley, pp. 227, 228, 231.

² Ibid., p. 232. ³ Ibid.

⁴ MS. Book of Privy-council, fol. 5, p. 1.

⁵ Ibid., fol. 4, p. 2.

⁶ Ibid. Proclamatio Pacis, 20th April 1550.

mother embarked for France. She was accompanied by De Thermes, La Chapelle, and other French officers, and by some of the principal nobility of Scotland, amongst whom were the Earls of Huntly, Cassillis, Sutherland, and Marshal, the Lords Home, Fleming, and Maxwell, with the prelates of Caithness and Galloway.¹ Landing at Dieppe, (19th September 1550,) they immediately proceeded to Rouen, where the court was then held, and were received with much distinction.² Amidst the festivities which welcomed her arrival,³ Mary of Guise explained her graver schemes against Arran to the French cabinet, and found them warmly encouraged by the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Duke of Guise. Nor did they find it difficult to bring over the French monarch to their opinion. They contended that on the success of superseding the governor depended the preservation of the French influence and of the ancient religion in Scotland. If the first failed, the other, they said, must inevitably decay; and it was to be feared, from the great progress of heresy in that country, that a reformation would be established in Scotland, similar to that which had taken place in the sister kingdom. On the contrary, if the pre-eminence of French counsels could be secured all would go well; and Ireland, which was universally ripe for insurrection, would throw off her allegiance, and needed but a token from France to be wholly at her devotion.⁴ Nor was this last a vain boast. The Archbishop of Ar-

magh, a busy envoy of the Papal government, who had been sent into that country with a commission to encourage a revolt against England, had arrived at the French court soon after the queen-dowager; and after giving an encouraging description of the universal discontent which prevailed in that unhappy country, proceeded to Rome.⁵

Convinced by such arguments, Henry declared his satisfaction with the projects of the queen-mother; and Panter, bishop of Ross, the Scottish ambassador at the court of France, with Sir Robert Carnegie and Hamilton, abbot of Kilwinning, repaired to Scotland for the purpose of breaking the affair to the regent. This they did in an artful manner: they represented to him the dilapidation of the revenue and the crown-lands which had taken place during his government, the rigid reckoning to which he must be called when the young queen came of age, and the impossibility of obtaining an honourable discharge, if he remained in his dangerous elevation. On the other hand, they held out the splendid bribe of the dukedom of Chatelherault for himself, and an establishment at the French court for his eldest son, if he agreed to resign the government; whilst they strengthened the party of the queen-mother by liberal promises to the Scottish nobles.⁶ It happened that at this moment the governor was deprived of the counsels of the Archbishop of St Andrews, who then lay on what was supposed a death-bed.

they say, is theirs when the king shall give but a token.

⁵ Sir John Mason to Privy-council MS. Letter, 8th Feb. 1550-1. Correspondence, p. 231. The archbishop's name was Wauchop. It is affirmed by Lesley, the Roman Catholic bishop of Ross, that he was blind from his infancy. But I suspect there must be here some mistake, as such blindness was a fatal objection by the laws of the Church. Sir John Mason, in speaking of him, says, "the blind Scot that *nameth himself* Archbishop of Ar-machan." See Lesley, p. 242.

⁶ Maitland, vol. ii. p. 884. Anderson, MS. History, vol. ii. p. 153. The Earl of Huntly was promised the earldom of Moray; and the youngest son of the Earl of Rothes, whose mother was a Hamilton, was to be created an earl.

¹ Lesley, p. 235. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Privy-council of England to Sir John Mason, ambassador in France, 11th August 1550. Vol. of Sir John Mason's Correspondence, State-paper Office, pp. 82, 83.

² Sir Jhvn Mason to the Privy-council. MS. Letter, 6th October 1550. Same vol. p. 118, State-paper Office. Lesley, p. 236.

³ Sir John Mason, the English ambassador, describes her as almost worshipped as a goddess. Sir John Mason to Privy-council, State-paper Office. Correspondence, p. 246, 23d Feb. 1550. See Illustrations, letter K.

⁴ MS. Letter, Mason to the Privy-council. Correspondence, p. 134, 19th Oct. 1550. The talk of this court amongst the baser sort is very large of our things: especially since the arriving of the Scots. . . . Ireland

The influence of a talented opponent of the queen-mother was thus removed; and Arran, left to himself, gave a reluctant and conditional assent.¹ Having so far succeeded, Mary of Guise took leave of her daughter, the Scottish queen, and passed over from France to the court of England, where she had an amicable interview with Edward the Sixth.² This was politic and judicious. It evinced her resolution to preserve pacific relations with this country, and formed part of that system of universal conciliation which for the present she had determined to maintain. Some time before this the Master of Erskine, and Sinclair, the President of the Session, had proceeded on an embassy to Flanders, where they concluded a peace with the emperor;³ and tranquillity being thus established abroad, the queen, on her return to Scotland, devoted her undivided energy to the composition of all differences amongst the nobility, and the establishment of order and good government. In justice to Arran, the regent, it ought to be stated that during her absence in France, he had exerted himself to accommodate those Border differences which had ever been so fertile a cause of exasperation; and in a convention signed by commissioners of both kingdoms at Norham, some wise regulations were introduced for the determination of the boundaries, the tranquillity of the Debateable Land, and the security of the commercial intercourse between the two countries.⁴

Nor was this all; two parliaments were held at Edinburgh in the spring and the winter of the year 1551, in which, amid much of that rude and narrow legislation which marks the age, some salutary laws were introduced. A vain attempt was made to fix the prices of wine and of pro-

visions, and repress the inordinate luxury of the table.⁵ An enactment was passed against the sins affirmed to be scandalously common: of adultery, bigamy, blasphemous swearing, and indecent behaviour during public worship; and the press, which it is declared had teemed with lewd rhymes and ballads, with scandalous songs and tragedies, was subjected to the censorship of an ordinary, and restricted by a law, which compelled every printer to obtain a licence from the queen and the governor.⁶

Subsequently to this, Arran took his progress through the northern parts of the kingdom, holding justice courts in the principal towns, and proceeded afterwards, accompanied by the queen-regent, to visit for the same purpose the western and southern districts of the realm. During the late war licentious disorders of all kinds had grown up amongst the lower classes; the restrictions of the laws were despised; the clergy, forgetful of the sanctity of their character, had quarrelled regarding the disposal of many rich vacant benefices; their friends had fiercely espoused their claims, and the country presented one wide scene of civil broil and ecclesiastical commotion. To compose this rude state of things required a union of energy and address which might have been deemed beyond the abilities of Arran, but his exertions were seconded by the queen-mother, who bent all her efforts to the task; and it says much for her talent, temper, and good sense that the measures which she adopted were successful. The clergy were satisfied, the nobles reconciled amongst themselves, the lower orders induced rather than compelled to respect the laws; and Mary of Guise, by her prudence and popular manners, so firmly attached all orders

¹ Lesley, p 238. Melvill's Memoirs, pp. 20, 21.

² Anderson, MS. History, vol. ii. p. 155.

³ Sir John Mason, Correspondence, pp. 203, 204. State-paper Office. MS. Letter, Sir John Mason to the Privy-council, 20th Jan. 1550-1. Anderson, MS. History, vol. ii. p. 152.

⁴ Maitland, vol. ii. p. 885. Rymer, vol. xv. p. 265.

⁵ No archbishop, bishop, or earl was permitted to have more than eight dishes of meat at his table; to the abbot and prior six were allowed; barons and freeholders were restricted to four; and wealthy burgesses to three, with one kind of meat in each.

⁶ Maitland, vol. ii. pp. 886, 889. Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 483, 490, inclusive.

to her party, that the governor began to dread he would be universally deserted.¹

This moment was artfully seized by her to remind Arran that it was now time for him to fulfil his promise, and resign the regency in her favour; but she met with an indignant refusal. He declared his resolution to retain the high office, which belonged to his rank as nearest heir to the crown; insisted that no such overtures could be entertained till the young queen had at least reached the age of twelve years; and so deeply resented the proposal, that he remained in Edinburgh with the few lords who still embraced his party, whilst the dowager held a brilliant court at Stirling.² He contended, and with truth, that since the peace with England he had devoted himself with unremitting assiduity to the duties of his office, to the assembling of the parliaments, the administration of justice, the improvement of the moral character of the people, the recovery of the country from the ravages committed during the war; and now, in return for all this, it was requested that he should at once descend from an almost royal rank, to the condition of a private subject, and lay down his authority at the mandate of a woman. These proud and resentful feelings, so opposite to the sentiments which he had expressed in 1551, were supposed to be instilled into the mind of Arran by his brother, the primate of St Andrews, who had now recovered his health,³ and with it his influence over the easy temper of his relative. A determined opposition was thus reorganised against the queen-mother: the archbishop represented to his brother the madness of retiring from the supreme power, when nothing stood between him and the crown but the life of a feeble girl;⁴

¹ Lesley, p. 245.

² Maitland, vol. ii. p. 891. Lesley, p. 245.

³ By the means of the famous Cardan, "who hung him certain days by the heels, and fed him with young whelps." MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 15th Jan. 1551-2. See Illustrations, letter L.

⁴ Sir James Melville's Memoirs, pp. 21, 73. Lesley, p. 245.

and nearly a year was spent in mutual crimination and intrigue.

The party of the governor, however, at length became so insignificant, that the primate was the only man of consequence left to him; and the queen, confident in her strength, threatened to call a parliament and exact an account of his administration of the royal revenue. She at the same time procured the young queen, her daughter, to select as her guardians the King of France, with her uncles, the Cardinal Lorraine and the Duke of Guise. They then devolved their authority upon the queen-dowager; and although Arran pleaded justly that the transaction was illegal, the young Mary being still in her minority, the objection was overruled, and he at last reluctantly consented to his abdication.

A parliament accordingly assembled at Edinburgh, on the 12th of April 1554, in which this solemn transaction was completed. The various instruments of agreement which had been entered into with Arran were first produced. They conferred on him the duchy of Chastelherault, and gave him an ample approval of the mode in which he had managed, and the purposes to which he had applied the revenue of the crown; he was permitted to retain the castle of Dumbarton till the Scottish queen attained majority; and he was lastly declared the second person in the realm, and, failing the queen, nearest heir to the crown. To these contracts the spiritual and temporal peers having affixed their seals, the Duke of Chastelherault, in the presence of the estates of the realm, resigned the ensigns of his authority into the hands of the queen-dowager; a commission by the Queen of Scotland was next produced and read, which appointed her mother, Mary of Lorraine, regent of her realm; and that princess, rising from her seat, accepted the office, and received the homage and congratulations of the assembled nobility. She was then conducted in a public procession with great pomp and acclamation through the city to the palace of Holyrood,

and immediately entered upon the administration of the government.¹ Meantime, in the midst of these transactions, the death of Edward the Sixth (July 6, 1553,) had occasioned a great revolution in England. The accession of Mary, the restoration of

the Roman Catholic faith, and the marriage between England and Spain, produced important effects upon Scotland, both in its internal state and its foreign policy, the consideration of which, however, belongs to a subsequent period of this history.

CHAPTER III.

MARY.

1554—1561.

MARY OF GUISE, who now assumed the supreme authority, was in many respects well qualified for her high station. She possessed a calm judgment; good, though not brilliant, natural parts; manners which, without losing their dignity, were feminine and engaging; and so intimate a knowledge of the character of the people over whom she ruled, that, if left to herself, there was every prospect of her managing affairs with wisdom and success. Her abilities, indeed, were sufficiently apparent in the quiet and triumphant manner in which she had brought about the revolution which placed her at the head of affairs. Although of a different religion, she had so entirely gained the affections of the Protestant party, that their support was one chief cause of her success. Nor by the prudent concessions which she made to their opponents had she alienated from herself the hearts of the adherents of the ancient faith, whose leaders she attached to her interest by gifts of the vacant benefices, and the exertion of her influence at the Papal court.² It

was chiefly by her management that the fierce and sanguinary feuds, which for a long period had distracted the Scottish aristocracy, were composed; and her assumption of the regency was viewed with equal satisfaction by the clergy, the nobility, and the people.

But the possession of power is fraught with danger to the best. She had incurred many obligations to the court of France, which her gratitude or her promises impelled her to repay, by intruding foreigners into the offices hitherto filled by natives; and, unmindful of the extraordinary jealousy with which the Scottish people were disposed to regard all interference of this kind, she lent herself to measures dictated more by the ambition of the house of Guise, than by a desire to promote the happiness of her daughter's kingdom.

Her first act went far to disgust the nobility and the nation. Huntly, the chancellor,³ although permitted to re-

entitled "Answers to the most Christian King of France's Memorial," given to Thomas, master of Erskine, ambassador to the court of France.

¹ This powerful and able nobleman, who was the head of the Catholic party in Scotland, had been taken prisoner in the battle of Pinkie, by Ralph Vane, (Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii. p. 130, dorso,) but made his

¹ Lesley, pp. 247, 249, 250. Anderson's MS. History of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 158, 159, 162.

² Lesley, pp. 241, 242. MS. Records of Privy-council, fol. 8, p. 2, in a State Paper.

tain the name, was superseded in all real power by Monsieur de Rubay, who obtained the place of vice-chancellor and possession of the great seal. Villemore was made comptroller, a place of high responsibility; and D'Osell, although placed in no office, became her confidential adviser in all matters of state.¹ These imprudent preferments excited a dissatisfaction, which was indeed smothered for the time, but afterwards broke out with fatal force against the regent.

In the meantime the kingdom became disturbed in the north, where the fierce and powerful clan Ranald, under their leader, John of Moydart, resumed their career of misrule and spoliation. The general policy hitherto pursued in those districts was that introduced by James the Fourth. It was the practice of this monarch to keep the various clans in subordination by encouraging their mutual rivalry, and employing them as checks upon each other. In the event of any sept rising into a dangerous pre-eminence, or, as was not unusual, into open rebellion, one of the most powerful northern nobles, Athole, Huntly, or Argyle, was intrusted with a commission of lieutenancy; and, on repairing to the disturbed districts with an armed force, they engaged some of the rival clans to assist in putting down the insurrection. There can be no doubt that such commissions, of which the powers were indefinite, had been often abused to the purposes of individual ambition. The great lords looked for forfeitures of the lands of the Highland chiefs to reward themselves and their followers; and, on many occasions, rather encouraged treason than promoted submission. It was a consequence of this miserable system that these chiefs continued in rebellion, not so much from any unwillingness to acknowledge the authority of the

escape in 1548, and on his return to Scotland was restored to his office of chancellor. An interesting account of his escape will be found in Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii pp. 130, 131.

¹ Keith's Eccl. History, pp. 69, 70. Lesley, pp. 250, 251. Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii. p. 174, *dorsc*

government, as from a dread of the influence and misrepresentations of their enemies.

In 1552, when the Regent Arran and the queen-dowager held their court at Inverness, John of Moydart, the leader of the clan Ranald, had treated with proud contempt their summons to appear before them; and although Argyle afterwards promised to compel his attendance, or to expose him to the extremity of fire and sword, both the promise and the penalty appear to have been forgot. In 1554, he and his adherents once more bid defiance to the government; and Huntly, armed with a commission of lieutenancy, and leading an army chiefly composed of Lowland barons, proceeded against him as far as Aber-tarff in Inverness-shire. His attempt, however, was singularly unsuccessful; for when it became necessary to pursue the daring outlaw into his mountain fastnesses, his Lowland leaders declined acting in a country unsuited for cavalry; whilst his Highland auxiliaries reproached him for the execution of Mackintosh, captain of the clan Chattan,² and shewed such marked symptoms of disaffection, that Huntly deemed it prudent to conclude his inglorious expedition, and return to court.

His enemies eagerly seized this opportunity to conspire his ruin. His conduct, they contended, amounted to treason; and they insisted that nothing but Huntly's confidence in his exorbitant power could have induced him to have acted with such flagrant contempt of the orders which he had received from his sovereign. To such accusations the queen lent a willing ear. The earl was cast into prison, stripped of his high offices, and sentenced to be banished for five years to France.³ When we consider the services so lately performed by Huntly in the revolution which gave Mary of Guise the regency, it is difficult to understand the causes of that sudden

² Lesley, pp. 251, 252. Maitland, vol. ii p. 893.

³ Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles, pp. 183, 184.

resentment to which he fell a victim. That he had abused the high powers intrusted to him, in the administration of the northern counties, is not improbable; and his imperious demeanour had perhaps provoked the resentment of the queen's foreign advisers. One of these, Monsieur de Bontot, superseded him in his government of Orkney. De Rubay, we have already seen, in his character of vice-chancellor, had monopolised all the powers of the great seal, which properly belonged to Huntly as chancellor; and although he still kept the name of this office, and, by the payment of a heavy fine, procured the remission of his sentence of banishment, he remained stripped of his strength, and confined to the solitude of his estates.¹

Notwithstanding these occasional demonstrations of severity against her Scottish nobles, the exertions of the queen-regent were for some years successfully devoted to the maintenance of peace, and the promotion of the real welfare of the kingdom. Commissioners from England and Scotland met and established tranquillity upon the Borders. She received assurances from Mary of England of her anxious desire for the preservation of friendly feelings between the two countries, and in return expressed a hope that this princess would not only be a "peace-keeper, but a peace-maker," in promoting a reconciliation between the French monarch and the emperor.²

At home a parliament assembled at Edinburgh,³ in which many wise and judicious laws were introduced for the abbreviation of legal processes, and the administration of equal justice throughout the country. Upon this subject, the regent was principally guided by the sage counsels of Henry Sinclair, dean of Glasgow, a man of

¹ He was compelled to resign some lucrative gifts of lands, particularly the earldoms of Mar and Moray. Gregory's History, p. 184.

² State-paper Office, Mary to the Queen-regent, January 12, 1553. MS. Letter, Original Draft. Also, State-paper Office, MS. Letter, Lord Conyers to the Council. B. C., March 12, 1554-5, Berwick.

³ June 10, 1555.

profound legal knowledge, and almost equal eminence as a scholar and a statesman.⁴ It appears by one of these statutes that the maintenance of French soldiers within the realm, a subject which proved subsequently a fertile source of revolt, had even then occasioned discontent. Another evinces the growth of that spirit of reform which too austere proscribed such unruly personages as Robin Hood, Little John, the Queen of May, and the Abbot of Unreason; and prohibited those ancient games and festivals in which women, "singing about summer trees," (to adopt the poetic phraseology of the statute,) disturbed the queen and her lieges in their progress through the country.⁵ From this statute we may infer that Mary of Guise was still disposed to favour the Protestant party, to whose support she owed much of her success; and had she been permitted to follow the dictates of her own good sense, her administration would have continued popular. But, unfortunately, the war between France and England, and the influence which her brothers, the princes of the house of Guise, had acquired over her mind, compelled her about this time to the adoption of a measure which occasioned amongst the minor barons and the great body of the people extreme jealousy and disgust. She proposed to take an inventory of every man's estate and substance, and to impose a tax for the support of a large body of troops, which should serve instead of the usual national force, composed of the barons and their feudal retainers. The idea, which was none other than a scheme for a standing army, originated with the French and some of the highest Scottish nobility; but it met with a stern and prompt opposition. Three hundred barons and gentlemen assembled in the abbey church of Holyrood, and despatched the Lairds of Wemyss and Calder with their remonstrances to the regent. Their fathers, they said, had for many

⁴ Life of Sir Thomas Craig, pp. 79-81.

⁵ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 500.

centuries defended their native country against every attack, with their faithful vassals and their good swords. It was the ancient custom of the realm—they held their lands by that tenure; and as they trusted they had not degenerated from their ancestry, they besought the queen to use them as heretofore in that honourable service. Their monarch, they contended, was called King of Scots, with a special reference to his authority over the men, rather than over the substance of the country; and loath should they be, they declared, to intrust to any waged and mercenary soldiers the protection of their wives, their children, and their hearths, when they were ready and able with their own hands to defend them at the peril of their lives. It evinced the good sense of the queen-regent that she instantly desisted from the project, and acknowledged her error in having ever proposed it.¹

This wise conduct was for some time followed by the triumph of pacific counsels in Scotland. The ablest amongst the clergy and the most influential of the nobility, both Catholic and Protestant, strongly advocated their adoption; and commissioners having met, a treaty for the continuance of peace was concluded between the two nations;² but war having broken out between France and Spain, a sudden revolution appears to have taken place in the mind of the queen-dowager. On the one part, she beheld the Spanish or imperial party in Italy, headed by Philip, and now, since his marriage with Mary, strengthened by the accession of England; on the other, the Pope supported by the French king.³ To the latter side the daughter of the house of Guise naturally leant; and Henry the Second, aware of the importance of procuring such a diversion, omitted no effort to induce the re-

gent to invade England. Encouraged by these symptoms of approaching hostilities, the Scottish Borderers, who seldom waited for a declaration of war, broke violently across the marches, cruelly ravaged the country in successive inroads,⁴ and were only checked by a severe defeat, which Lord Hume received at Blackbrey.⁵ D'Osell in the meantime, one of the dowager's foreign advisers, and lately ambassador from the French court, raised a fort at Eyemouth, near Berwick, anticipating a speedy visit from the English, who instantly attacked him. This was all that was required; war was denounced, and the queen-dowager having assembled an army at Kelso, proposed an immediate invasion. She was met by a positive and mortifying refusal: Chastelherault, Huntly, Cassillis, and Argyle declared that the national honour had been amply asserted by the Border successes during the preceding months; they were ready, they said, to act on the defensive, but to plunge into war during the minority of their sovereign, with the single object of assisting France, would be as injurious as it was uncalled for. All parties, except the queen-regent and the French auxiliaries, agreed in the wisdom of this conduct; but the queen-regent was deeply incensed: she attempted to precipitate hostilities by commanding the foreigners to attack Wark, and having failed in this last resource, dismissed the army with expressions of anger and disgust.⁶

It is from this moment that we may date that unhappy division between the queen-regent and the Scottish nobles, which formed afterwards one of the principal causes of the war of the Reformation. At present, how-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B. C., Council to Lord Wharton, 29th July 1557.

² MS. 10th Nov. 1557, State-paper Office, B. C. Orig. Minute, Names of the Gentlemen taken at the battle of Blackbrey; since printed by Mr Stevenson in his Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary, p. 70.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B. C., Lord Wharton to the Council, 14th Nov. 1557, Berwick, Maitland, vol. ii. p. 900. Lesley, Hist., pp. 260, 261. Anderson's MS. Hist., pp. 184, 185.

¹ Lesley, p. 255. Keith, p. 71. Herries' Memoirs, pp. 29, 30. Anderson's MS. Hist., vol. ii. pp. 181, 182.

² Lesley, pp. 258, 259. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 10th July 1557, Earl of Westmoreland and the Bishop of Durham to Queen Mary.

³ Lesley, pp. 253, 259.

ever, religious differences did not enter into the dispute. The great object of Mary of Guise was to bridle the power of Chastelherault, Argyle, and Huntly, who had opposed the councils of France; and it is remarkable that, at this moment, James, prior of St Andrews, styled by Lord Wharton, "one of the wisest of the late king's base sons," and afterwards the Regent Moray, made his appearance in public life as an adherent of the dowager. Sir William Kirkaldy, with young Maitland of Lethington, the secretary, a man of great talents and ambition, espoused the same faction; and it was proposed to recall secretly into Scotland the Earl of Lennox and the Lady Margaret Douglas, whose restoration to their former rank and power might prove, it was hoped, an effectual counterpoise to the influence of their opponents.¹

*Mother
Ranley*

Some unforeseen impediments, however, interrupted the execution of this scheme, and the regent had recourse to a more effectual mode of strengthening her influence. A parliament assembled at Edinburgh,² in which a letter was presented from the King of France, earnestly recommending that the intended marriage between the dauphin and the young Queen of Scots should be carried into effect. He requested that commissioners should be sent over to give the sanction of their presence to this solemnity; and, in compliance with his wishes, Beaton, the archbishop of Glasgow; Reid, president of the Session; Cassillis, lord high treasurer; the Lords Fleming and Seton, with the Prior of St Andrews, and Erskine of Dun, the leaders of the Protestant party, were chosen to execute this important mission. They were instructed not to consent to the marriage until they had obtained from the queen and the dauphin a promise, in the most ample form, for the preservation of the integrity of the kingdom, and the observation of its ancient laws

and liberties. The young queen and her husband were to be required at the same time to grant a commission for a regent, to whom the supreme power was to be delegated.

The commissioners, after a perilous passage, in which two of their convoy were wrecked, disembarked at Boulogne, and proceeding to the French court, received an honourable reception, and found a ready compliance with all their demands. Having secured, as they imagined, the rights of the kingdom, they proceeded to arrange the conditions of the marriage.³ It was provided that the eldest son of the marriage should be King of France and Scotland; the dauphin, by consent of the French king, his father, and the queen, his consort, was to bear the name and title of King of Scotland; to be allowed to quarter the arms of that crown with his own; and, on his accession to the throne of France, to assume the title and arms of both kingdoms united under one crown. In the event of there being only daughters of the marriage, the eldest was to be Queen of Scotland; to have, as a daughter of France, a portion of four hundred thousand crowns; and to be disposed of in marriage with the united consent of the estates of Scotland and the King of France. The jointure of the young queen was fixed at six hundred thousand livres if her husband died after his accession to the throne; but if she became a widow when he was dauphin, it was to be reduced to half that sum. Lastly, the commissioners agreed, immediately after the marriage, to swear fealty to the dauphin, in the name of the estates of Scotland, and on the ground that their sovereign the dauphiness was his consort.⁴ These preliminaries having been arranged, the marriage was solemnised at Paris by the Cardinal Bourbon, in the cathe-

¹ This was on 19th April 1558. Keith, Hist., pp. 72, 73. Ibid., Appendix, p. 13.

² Keith, Appendix, p. 21. "A cause de la dite Dame Reyne Dauphine nostre Souveraine, son Espouse et Compaigne." The meaning is, that they swear fealty to the dauphin as the husband of their queen.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B. C., Lord Wharton to the Council, 14th Nov. 1557.

² Dec. 14, 1557.

dral church of Notre Dame. It completed the almost despotic power of the house of Guise; and the proud princes of this family, who saw their niece already a queen, now promoted to the rank of dauphiness, were solicitous to impart to the ceremony all imaginable splendour. The King and Queen of France, four cardinals, the princes of the blood, and the flower of the French nobility, surrounded the altar; and the classic genius of Buchanan hailed the event in an Epithalamium, which is one of the sweetest effusions of his muse.

Such were the outward forms which preceded and accompanied this important union; and in appearance the conduct of the French court was fair and honourable; but another, and a far different scene of Guisian treachery and ambition had been acting within the recesses of the cabinet. Ten days previous to her marriage, three papers were presented to the young queen. By the first, she made over her kingdom of Scotland, in free gift, to the King of France, if she died childless; by the second, drawn up to meet the very probable case of a resistance by the Scots to so extraordinary a transfer, she assigned to the same monarch the possession of her kingdom, till he should be reimbursed in the sum of a million pieces of eight, or any such greater sum as he should have expended upon her education in France; and by the last she was made to declare that these two deeds contained the genuine sense of her mind, whatever might appear to the contrary in any declarations which she should publish, in compliance with the desire of her parliament.¹ These secret deeds the Guises induced their niece to sign; she was only fifteen, completely under their influence, and probably dreamt not of resistance; but when they brought the Scottish commissioners before the French council, and required them not only to swear fealty to the king-dauphin, but to agree that he should receive the ensigns of royalty, they were met in this step of their ambition by a peremptory re-

fusal: "Our instructions," said the ambassadors, "are distinct, and embrace no such matter, and even if free, it is little the part of faithful friends to name to us a proposal which, if agreed to, would cover us with infamy."²

Disguising their resentment, the princes of the house of Guise requested that the commissioners would at least support their interests in the parliament; and the Scottish prelates and nobles set out on their return. On reaching Dieppe, (Reid, the bishop of Orkney, one of the wisest and most upright men in Scotland,) died suddenly on the 6th of September; after two days, he was followed to the grave by the Earl of Rothes; Cassillis, within a very brief interval, was seized with a similar illness, which carried him off; Fleming did not long survive him; and although no infectious disease was then prevalent in the country, several of their retinue sickened and expired. It was not surprising that men should connect these circumstances with the scenes lately acted at Paris; and there arose a suspicion that the commissioners were poisoned by the Duke of Guise and his brothers, who had thus determined to get rid of an influence which they knew would be exerted against them.³ The Archbishop of Glasgow, the Prior of St Andrews, Lord Seton, and the Laird of Dun, continuing their voyage, arrived in Scotland in October, and the queen-regent immediately summoned a parliament, which assembled at Edinburgh in the beginning of December.

Its proceedings were brief, but important. On receiving from the surviving ambassadors an account of their mission, the three estates approved and ratified their transactions. It was agreed at the same time that the crown matrimonial should be given to the dauphin; that he should have the name of King of Scotland during the continuance of the marriage; that all

² Maitland, p. 903.

³ Keith, p. 75. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 10th August 1560. Ibid., Ledington to Cecil, 15th August 1560.

letters in Scotland should henceforth run in the style of "Francis and Mary, King and Queen of Scotland, Dauphin and Dauphiness of Vienne;" and that the great seal of the kingdom and the current money of the realm should be changed.¹ During the progress of these negotiations, hostilities with England had continued, and the war between that country and France was carried on with signal success upon the side of the Duke of Guise, whose arms were crowned with the long-coveted conquest of Calais. But this triumph was soon after followed by the death of Mary of England, and the accession of Elizabeth to the throne; an event which occasioned an immediate change in the councils of that kingdom, and produced consequences especially worthy of attention.

It is well known that this great princess commenced her reign by the complete establishment of the Reformation in her own dominions, and by placing herself at the head of the Protestant party in Europe. Indifferent herself to religion, as far as it influences the individual character, she hated the Puritans, and was attached to the pomp and show of prelacy. But her masculine understanding had early detected the errors of the Roman Catholic faith; her mind, naturally imperious, refused equally to acknowledge in man a spiritual or a temporal superior; and her discernment, aided by the councils of the far-reaching Cecil, taught her, that to continue faithful to the principles of the Reformation offered the best hopes for the preservation of peace, the restoration of her exhausted finances, and the security of her kingdom. At home, two great principles regulated her government, — a determination to avoid war, even at considerable sacrifices, and to enforce in every department of the state a rigid economy.) To the great majority of her subjects, her accession to the throne was a joyful event; yet Elizabeth was aware that a large proportion of the people, far larger indeed

than is commonly imagined, were still attached to the ancient faith, and she was naturally jealous of everything that tended to increase the political power of Rome. Whilst she thus carefully watched the state of the two parties within her own dominions, she saw on the continent the same struggle of opinion dividing the leading states into two great factions; and by skilfully balancing them against each other, she contrived to keep them too much occupied at home to be able to give her any serious annoyance. The loss of Calais, which for two centuries had been in the possession of England, and still more, the resolution on the part of the Guises to assert the title of their niece, the Queen of Scotland, to the English throne, in exclusion of Elizabeth, whom they pronounced illegitimate, were circumstances calculated to rouse the indignation of this princess. At a future period she clearly shewed that Mary's assumption of the arms of England, whilst still Queen of France, had not been forgotten by her; but for the present, policy got the better of resentment, and after having declined a proposal upon the part of the French monarch to enter into a private and separate peace, she became a party to the public treaty concluded between France and Spain, at Chateau Cambresis, (25th May 1559).²

Her chief difficulties lay on the side of Scotland. In her instructions to the Bishop of Ely, Lord William Howard, and Dr Nicholas Wotton, whom she sent soon after her accession to negotiate the treaty with France, we find her laying down the principle, that peace with Scotland is of greater consequence than peace with France, and that unless the Scots should be included, it were needless to continue the negotiations.³

² MS. State-paper Office, Original oath signed by Elizabeth to observe the treaty of Chateau Cambresis. French Correspondence, May 1559, and attestation of the taking the oath, by Sir W. Cecil. Ibid.

³ MS. State-paper Office. Instructions to Lord Wm. Howard, Thomas Thirlby, bishop of Ely, and Dr Wotton, 28th Feb. 1558-9. Sir J. Williamson's Collection, first series, vol. xix. p. 433, in Cecil's handwriting, cor-

Nor did the queen-regent appear unwilling to meet these advances : she despatched her able secretary, Maitland of Lethington, to assist at the conferences in France,¹ and at the same time that a pacification was concluded between England, France, and Spain,² a separate treaty for the cessation of hostilities was entered into between England and Scotland.³ It was declared, that from this time a firm and lasting peace should be concluded between the two countries ; that, to remove all ground of controversy, Eyemouth, and the new fortifications raised by the king-dauphin and the Queen of Scots, should be destroyed, and that all castles or strengths lately built by the English on the Borders should be cast down. Some minor points were reserved for the determination of commissioners, sent mutually by both kingdoms ; and these envoys having met at Norham, (31st May 1559,) the negotiations were brought to a successful termination.⁴

Elizabeth had thus apparently accomplished the object which she so much desired ; yet she knew too well the internal state of France, and the seeds of division which had been planted in Scotland, to rely on the continuance of amicable relations : the strong footing which the French had already gained in that kingdom, the late marriage of the young queen with the dauphin, and the vast ambition of the house of Guise, rendered her anxious to adopt every method for the strengthening of the Protestant cause, and the dismissal

rected by the queen. See also Forbes' State Papers, vol. i. p. 59.

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Queen Dowager to Elizabeth, March 4, 1558-9.

² 2d April 1559.

³ Rymer, *Federa*, vol. xv. p. 513. *Ibid.*, p. 527. Also MS. Instructions of Elizabeth to Lord William Howard ; Lord Howard of Effingham, Dr Wotton, and Sir N. Throgmorton, 6th May 1559, State-paper Office ; Sir J. Williamson's Collection, vol. xix. p. 419 ; also Letter of Elizabeth to Mary of Guise, 30th May 1559, State-paper Office.

⁴ MSS. Treasurer's accounts in Register Office, Edinburgh, under March 3, 1558-9 ; To William Maitland of Lethington, passing to London and France in the Queen's Grace's affairs, £750.

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of the French auxiliaries from the service of the queen-dowager. But before we attempt to fathom her deep and somewhat unscrupulous policy for the attainment of these objects, it becomes necessary to look back for a moment that we may trace the progress of the Reformation in Scotland.

The history of this great revolution in the history of the human mind is in Scotland connected almost exclusively with one extraordinary man—the intrepid and unbending Knox. When we last parted with him, it was after the surrender of the castle of St Andrews, (1547,) when he and other fellow-sufferers were carried prisoners aboard the galleys, into France. After a long and tedious captivity, he regained his liberty, (1550,) in consequence of the intercession of Edward the Sixth with the French monarch,⁵ and having repaired to England, he found himself cordially welcomed and supported by the ministers of the young sovereign. Here he willingly gave his powerful aid to Cranmer, in the establishment of that Reformation which had been left imperfect by Henry the Eighth ; but the sudden death of the king, and the accession of Mary, compelled him to fly to the Continent. During his exile, he was called to be minister of the English refugees at Frankfort ; but his attachment to the doctrines of Calvin, with whom he had formed an intimate friendship, made it impossible for him to adopt the principles of those who preferred the service book of Edward the Sixth to the more simple and, as it appeared to Knox, the more scriptural form of Presbyterian worship, which at first, in compliance with their wishes, he had introduced amongst them. Religious dissensions arose. Dr Cox, who had been tutor to Edward, vehemently contended for the service book. His party became all-powerful ; and the Scottish reformer, driven from his pulpit and accused by his opponents of treason against the emperor,

⁵ The proofs of this fact will be found in a work which the author published in 1839. "England under the Reigns of Edward VI and Mary," vol. i. p. 295.

once more retreated into his native country, and took up his residence in the capital. Before leaving the Continent, he had again visited Calvin, at Geneva. The conversation of this celebrated man, then in the height of his reputation, confirmed Knox in his affection to that form of worship which had been established at Geneva. His solitary reflections in exile, and under persecution, had, as we learn from his eloquent and pathetic letters, assumed an extraordinary bitterness of self-reproach : they seemed to upbraid him as one who had fled from the fold, and deserted his flock when the spiritual conflict most required his presence ; and he returned to Scotland in 1555 with the stern resolution to "spare no arrows," to abide at his post, and to sacrifice everything for the complete establishment of the Reformation, according to those principles which he believed to be founded on the Word of God.

During his absence from his native country, the persecutions of Mary had driven some of the reformers to take refuge in Scotland. Harlow, originally a tradesman in the lower ranks of life, but afterwards a zealous preacher under Edward the Sixth, took up his abode in Ayrshire, and assembled around him a little congregation ; John Willock, a Scottish Franciscan Friar, who had been converted to Protestantism, and afterwards admitted a chaplain to the Duke of Suffolk, was another of these labourers. He had been sent twice, in 1555 and 1558, on missions from the Duchess of Friesland, in whose dominions he had sought refuge, to the queen-regent ; and as his affability, moderation, and address were equal to his learning and piety, he was received with distinction, and privately permitted to address his exhortations to all who were anxious for instruction.

The second arrival of Willock gave a great impulse to the cause of the Reformation. "The images," says Knox, "were stolen away, in all parts of the country ; and in Edinburgh, that great idol called St Giles was first drowned in the North Loch, and afterwards burnt, which raised no small trouble

in the town." Notwithstanding this marked demonstration, it was resolved by the queen-regent and the bishops that the usual procession appointed for the saint's day should not be omitted ; and having procured another image from the Grey Friars, and fixed it to a wooden barrow, which was borne on men's shoulders, the cavalcade, headed by the regent herself, surrounded by priests and canons, and attended by tabors and trumpets, proceeded down the High Street towards the cross. The sight inflamed the passions of the Protestants ; and various bands of the citizens, abhorring what they esteemed an abomination, resolved upon revenge. Nor was it long before this was accomplished : for scarce had the queen-dowager retired, when some of these, under pretence of assisting the bearers, caught hold of the barrow, cast down the image, and dashed it to pieces on the pavement ; and then (I use Knox's words) "the priests and friars fled faster than they did at Pinkie-cleuch : down go the crosses, off go the surplices, round caps, coronets, with the crowns. The Grey Friars gaped, the Black Friars blew, the priests panted and fled, and happy was he that first got the house, for such a sudden fray came never among the generation of Antichrist within this realm before."¹

Yet although some progress had been made, and Knox hailed with gratitudo the co-operation of Willock, it was with feelings of astonishment, bordering upon horror, that he found the friends of the Protestant opinions unresolved upon the great question whether it was their duty openly to separate from the Roman Catholic Church. Many of them continued still to sanction by their presence the celebration of the mass ; and as the queen-dowager had found it necessary, in the prosecution of her political objects, to extend her favour to the Protestants, they were anxious to stretch their conformity to the national Church, as far, perhaps even farther than their consciences permitted. The discourses of the reformer, who at first preached privately to a few friends in

¹ Knox, p. 104.

the house of James Syme, a burgess of Edinburgh, soon threw a new light upon the danger of such concessions.¹ Men's consciences became alarmed. A solemn disputation was held upon the point between Maitland of Lethington and Knox. The secretary, a man of remarkable learning and ingenuity, exerted his powers to defend the practice which he and his brethren had adopted. But Knox, deeply read in the Scriptures, undaunted in his adherence to what he esteemed the truth, and master of a familiar and fervid eloquence, which was adapted to the age and the audience, triumphed over his more elegant and subtle disputant. Maitland acknowledged his error; the practice was renounced, and it was agreed by the congregation which now surrounded the reformer that a public and formal separation must henceforth be made from the Catholic Church in Scotland.²

Amongst his hearers and followers at this time (1555) we find some men who became afterwards noted in the history of their country: Erskine of Dun, a baron of ancient family, whose learning was superior to the times; Sir James Sandilands, commonly called Lord St John, a veteran in his adherence to the Reformation; Archibald, Lord Lorn, afterwards Earl of Argyle; the Master of Mar; the Lord James, afterwards regent; the Earl of Glencairn, and the Earl Marshal, were usually present at his sermons, and ardent admirers of his doctrine. At length the Catholic clergy, hitherto unaccountably indifferent, roused themselves from their lethargy, and Knox was summoned to appear before an ecclesiastical convention in the capital.³ He repaired to Edinburgh prepared to defend his principles, and to his astonishment found the diet deserted, and his pulpit surrounded, not by his accusers, but by crowds of affectionate and zealous disciples, to whom

for a short season he was permitted to preach without interruption or disturbance. This liberty he probably owed to the toleration of the queen-regent; but when, at the request of the Earl Marshal, he carried his boldness so far as to address to this daughter of the house of Guise a letter, in which he exhorted her not only to protect the reformed preachers, but to lend a favourable ear to their doctrine, he found his propositions received with derision and contempt. Receiving his letter from Glencairn, and glancing carelessly over it, the dowager handed it to the Archbishop of Glasgow, asking him if his lordship was solicitous to read a pasquil—a mode of proceeding which the reformer treated afterwards with uncommon severity.⁴

At this critical period, when rejoicing in the success of his preaching, and congratulating himself that the time of the Church's deliverance was drawing nigh, Knox received an invitation to become pastor of the reformed congregation at Geneva; and the readiness with which he obeyed the summons is an inexplicable circumstance in his life.⁵) Although his labours had been singularly rewarded, the infant congregation which he had gathered round him still required his nurture and protection. During his last journey into Angus, the threatenings of the friars and bishops had increased, and the clouds of persecution were seen gathering around him. The state of the Reformation at Geneva, on the contrary, was prosperous. He had before bitterly upbraided himself for deserting his appointed charge in the hour of peril; yet he now repeated the same conduct, left his native country, and settled with his family on the Continent. It was in vain to tell his followers, as he did, that if they continued in godliness, whenever they pleased they might command his return. They were continuing in the truth, as he has himself informed us, and they earnestly but unsuccessfully endeavoured to detain him. The rage,

¹ Knox, pp. 98, 99. Keith, p. 64. M'Crie, vol. i. p. 176.

² M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. i. p. 177. Anderson's MS. Hist., vol. ii. pp. 173, 174. The disputation was held at a supper given by the Laird of Dun.

³ Anderson's MS. Hist., p. 175.

⁴ M'Crie's Life, vol. i. p. 188.

⁵ Keith, p. 65.

indeed, of his opponents was about to assume at this time a deadly aspect. They had delated him to the queen as an enemy to magistrates, as well as a seducer of the people, and possibly by retiring he saved his life;¹ but judging with all charity, it must be admitted that, whilst his writings at this season had all the impassioned zeal, his conduct betrayed some want of the ardent courage of the martyr.

His retreat had an immediate and unfavourable effect on the progress of the new opinions. The bishops and the friars increased in boldness and violence. Knox, whose personal encounter they dreaded, now that his appearance was impossible, received a summons to stand his trial; condemnation followed, and he was burnt in effigy at the high cross of the capital.² Previous to his departure, the reformer exhorted his followers to continue their private meetings, which he said they ought to open and conclude with prayer, to read the Scriptures, and to listen to the word of exhortation from any experienced brother, provided his instructions were given with modesty and a desire to edify. Such directions they willingly obeyed; and secure in the countenance and protection of the queen-mother, who at this time courted their assistance, they became less the objects of jealousy and persecution to their adversaries of the Catholic faith. Nor were they long left without preachers. In the year succeeding the retirement of Knox, (John Douglas, a converted Carmelite friar) who was chaplain to the Earl of Argyle, not only addressed a private congregation, but spoke openly at the court against some superstitions of the times. Paul Methyen, originally

¹ Such is the opinion of his late able biographer, Dr M'Crie. Anderson's MS. Hist., vol. ii. p. 175, dorso. In a collection of manuscript letters relative to Scottish History, in the possession of Mr Dawson Turner, and which the kindness of that gentleman permitted me to look over, there is an anonymous Paper, entitled "The Apology of our Departure," which appears to me to be the composition of the reformer at this interesting crisis. It proves that Knox fled for fear of his life.

² In 1558.

a tradesman, began to teach in Dundee; others exhorted the people in Angus and Mearns, and the Roman clergy taking alarm, so far succeeded in working upon the fears of the regent that she issued a proclamation summoning the preachers to answer for their conduct. This they prepared instantly to obey, but the gentlemen of the west of Scotland, who formed the chief part of their congregations, resolved to accompany them to their trial, and many already had arrived in the capital, when the queen, dreading a tumult, commanded all who had no express exemption to repair for fifteen days to the Borders. Far from submitting to an order of which they easily detected the object, the barons surrounded the palace, obtained an audience, and in reply to the remonstrances of the regent thus addressed her—"We know, madam, that this is the device of the bishops who now stand beside you. We avow to God we shall make a day of it. They oppress us and our poor tenants to feed themselves; they trouble our ministers, and seek to undo them and us all. We will not suffer it any longer." This bold address was delivered by Chalmers of Gathgirth, one of the barons of the west; and it is said, as he concluded it, his companions, who had hitherto been uncovered, with an air of defiance put on their steel caps. The regent was intimidated, declared that she meant no violence against their teachers, revoked the proclamation, and promised to be herself the judge of the controversy.³

This success, and a period of tranquillity which succeeded to it, emboldened the leaders of the reform party, the Earl of Glencairn, Lord Lorn, son of the Earl of Argyle, Erskine of Dun, and the Prior of St Andrews, afterwards the celebrated Regent Moray, to request the return of Knox to his native country. In a letter addressed to the reformer they informed him that the "faithful of his acquaintance were steadfast to the belief in which he had left them, that

³ Knox's Hist., p. 103. Spottiswood, B. ii. p. 94. Keith, p. 62.

they thirsted for his presence, and were ready to jeopard their lives for the glory of God. Little cruelty," they observed, "had been used against them; the influence of the friars was decreasing, and they had good hopes that God would augment his flock."

Obeying this invitation, Knox resigned his charge at Geneva, and arriving at Dieppe on his way to Scotland, was met there, to his grief and mortification, by letters which arrested his journey. They stated that the zeal of the reformers had suddenly cooled; that many, contented with the toleration they enjoyed, preferred the security of worshipping God in private according to their conscience, to the peril attending a public reformation; and that the scheme which had given rise to their letter had been precipitately abandoned. It did not belong to the disposition or principles of the reformer to bear this vacillating conduct in silence. He addressed to them an immediate and indignant remonstrance, urged upon them the sacred duty of accomplishing the great work which they had begun; assured them that although dangers and trials must be met with in its prosecution, their relinquishing it would not save them from the most tyrannical proscription; and concluded by reminding them that so vitally important a matter as the reformation of religion belonged to them, the nobility, even more than to the clergy or chief rulers called kings.¹

This epistle, which was accompanied by a detailed address to the nobles, and by private letters to Erskine of Dun and Wishart of Pitarrow, two leading men amongst the reformers, produced an astonishing effect. The lords deplored their weakness; a new impulse was given to the cause; zeal and resolution animated their repentant followers; and on the 3d of December 1557 that memorable bond or covenant was drawn up which henceforth united the Protestants under one great association, which was subscribed immediately by their principal supporters, and could not be de-

serted without something like apostasy. It described, in no mild or measured terms, the bishops and ministers of the Roman Catholic Church, as members of Sathan, who sought to destroy the gospel of Christ and his followers; and declared that they felt it to be their duty to strive in their Master's cause even unto death—certain as they were of victory in Him. For this purpose it declared that they had entered into a solemn promise in the presence of "the Majesty of God and his congregation," to set forward and establish with their whole power and substance His blessed Word—to labour to have faithful ministers—to defend them at the peril of their lives and goods against all tyranny; and it concluded by anathematising their adversaries, and denouncing vengeance against all the superstition, idolatry, and abominations of the Roman Church.²

This bond, which was drawn up at Edinburgh, received the signatures of the Earls of Glencairn, Argyle, Morton, Lord Lorn, Erskine of Dun, and many others. It was evidently an open declaration of war against the established religion—toleration and compromise were at an end; and their next step shewed that the Congregation, for so the reformers now named themselves, were determined to commence their proceedings in earnest. They passed a resolution, declaring "that in all parishes of the realm the common prayers," (by which was meant the service book of Edward the Sixth,³) "should be read weekly, on Sunday and other festival days, in the parish churches, with the lessons of the Old and New Testament conform to the order of the Book of Common Prayer; and that, if the curates of parishes be qualified, they shall be caused to read the same;" but if they refuse, then the most qualified in the parish were directed to supply their place. It was resolved at the same time, that "doctrine, preaching, and interpretation of Scripture be used privately in quiet houses, avoiding

¹ Keith, pp. 65, 66

² Keith, p. 66. Knox's Hist. p. 110.

³ This will be afterwards proved.

great conventions of the people thereto, until such time as God should move the prince to grant public preaching by true and faithful ministers."¹

These resolutions the Lords of the Congregation proceeded to put in execution in such places as were under their power. The Earl of Argyle encouraged Douglas, his chaplain, to preach openly in his house; other barons imitated his example; a second invitation was addressed to Knox,² requesting his immediate presence amongst them, and a deep alarm seized the whole body of the Roman clergy. They represented, not unreasonably, the declarations of the Congregation, and their subsequent conduct, as acts bordering upon treason; the Catholic faith, they said, was still the established religion of the state; it enjoyed the sanction of the laws, and the protection of the sovereign; and it was now openly attacked, and attempted to be subverted by a private association of men, who, although no ways recognised by the constitution, had assumed the power of legislation. To what this might grow it was difficult to say; but it was impossible to view so bold a denunciation of the national religion without apprehension and dismay.³

These remonstrances were addressed to the queen-regent at that critical season, when the marriage between her daughter and the dauphin, although proposed in the Scottish parliament, had not been fully agreed to. It was necessary for her to manage matters warily with the principal nobles, and she expressed a steadfast disinclination to all extreme measures against the Congregation. The Archbishop of St Andrews also, a prelate whose character partook nothing of cruelty, though his morals were loose, addressed an admonitory letter to Argyle, persuading him to dismiss his heretical chaplain, promising to supply his place with a learned and Catholic instructor, complaining of the reproaches to which

his ecclesiastical lenity had exposed him, and insinuating that repeated provocations might compel him, as the spiritual guardian of the Church, to adopt a severer course.⁴ Nor was it long before this severity was experienced, although there seems good ground for believing that the prelate was innocent of having instigated it. Walter Miln, a parish priest of Lunan, in Angus, had early embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, and having been seized and condemned as a heretic in the time of Beaton, was so fortunate as to escape from prison and remain in concealment in his native country. Encouraged by the subsequent leniency of the queen-dowager, this venerable minister, who was past eighty, had openly preached to the people; but the severity of the clergy again compelled him to seek his lurking places, and being discovered at this time, he was tried for heresy at St Andrews, and condemned to be burnt. From his feeble frame and great age it was expected that he would say little in his defence, but the old man exhibited uncommon spirit, and so deeply moved were all who heard his pathetic and ardent appeal, that after the clergy had pronounced him guilty no secular judge could be found to pass sentence. The odious office, however, was at last performed by a dissolute retainer of the Archbishop's, and he was led to the stake amid the tears and sympathy of an immense multitude, who execrated the cruelty of which he was the victim. Even when surrounded by the flames he yet asserted that the cause for which he sacrificed his life was the defence of the truth of Jesus Christ. "As for myself," said he, "I am fourscore and two years old, and cannot live long by the course of nature; but a hundred better shall rise out of the ashes of my bones: and I trust in God I am the last that shall suffer death in Scotland for this cause."⁵ And his wishes were happily fulfilled: he was the last victim in that country of a

¹ Keith, p. 66. Knox, p. 111.

² November 1558.

³ Cook, vol. ii. p. 35. Spottiswood, p. 117.

⁴ March 1558.

⁵ M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. i. p. 234. Knox, p. 30. Spottiswood, p. 95.

cruel and short-sighted persecution. (April 1558.)

This execution was viewed by the people with horror, and excited the utmost indignation in the leaders of the Congregation. They remonstrated in firm terms with the queen-regent, and when this princess assured them that she was no party to such sanguinary proceedings, their whole animosity was directed against the clergy. Emissaries, commissioned by the reformers, travelled through the country, exposing the superstition, wickedness, and injustice of such conduct; many of the lesser barons, and the greater part of the towns, joined the party; a majority of the people declared themselves ready to support the cause, and the Protestant lords presented an address to the dowager, in which they claimed redress at her hands "of the unjust tyranny used against them by those called the estate ecclesiastical."¹ "Your Grace," said they, "cannot be ignorant what controversy hath been, and yet is, concerning the true religion and right worshipping of God, and how the clergy (as they will be termed) usurp to themselves such empire over the consciences of men, that whatsoever they command must be obeyed, and whatsoever they forbid avoided, without respect to God's pleasure revealed in His Word, or else there abideth nothing for us but faggot, fire, and sword." They then noticed the cruel executions of their brethren, and declared that, although at the time they had neither defended these martyrs nor demanded a redress of their wrongs, they were now convinced that, as "a part of that power which God had established in the realm, it was their duty either to have protected them from such extremity, or to have borne along with them open testimony to their faith. It was evident," they said, "that abusés had now grown to such a head that a public reformation was necessary, as well in religion as in the temporal government of the state, and they therefore implored her grace and her grave council, whom

¹ Keith, p. 78.

they willingly acknowledged as the only authority placed in the realm for the correction of ecclesiastical and civil disorders, that she would listen to their requests, unless by God's Word it could be shewn that they were unjust, and ought to be denied.² The following requisitions were appended to the supplication; they were drawn up with force and clearness, and involved, if granted, a complete reformation. It was demanded, first, that the Congregation should be allowed to meet in public or in private, to hear common prayers in the vulgar tongue, that they might increase in knowledge, and be led with all fervour and sincerity to offer up their petitions for the Universal Church, the queen, their sovereign, and her royal consort, the regent, and the whole estates of the realm. Secondly, That it should be lawful for any one present, who was well qualified in knowledge, to interpret any obscure passages in the Scriptures which should be read. Thirdly, That baptism and the Lord's supper should be administered in the vulgar tongue, and this last sacrament in both kinds, according to our Saviour's institution; and lastly, that the present wicked and scandalous lives of the clergy should be reformed, in obedience to the rules contained in the New Testament, the writings of the Fathers, and the godly laws of the Emperor Justinian—which three standards they were willing should decide the controversy between them and the Romish clergy.³

These proposals, and the supplication which introduced them, although expressed with apparent moderation, could not be viewed without alarm by the queen-dowager. The Lords of the Congregation acknowledged her indeed as the sole constituted authority within the realm, yet, with some inconsistency, they not only represented themselves as part of that power which God had established, but declared it to have been pusillanimous in them

² Keith, pp. 78, 79. Knox's Hist., p. 127.

³ Spottiswood, book iii. p. 119. Keith, p. 120. Knox, p. 129.

not to have actively interfered in defence of their brethren against the tyranny by which they had been oppressed. As barons of Parliament, they were certainly part of the established power in the realm; but to have defended their oppressed brethren by any faction or assembly out of parliament would have been unconstitutional and illegal. Again, when in their first petition they asked permission to use the common prayers in the vulgar tongue, we know, by certain evidence, that the service book of King Edward was here meant; but when they required that any lay person sufficiently learned should be allowed in their meetings to interpret obscure passages, they appear to have demanded a liberty unknown to the most zealous Presbyterians of the present day.

However unpalatable such requests might be, it did not suit the views of Mary of Guise to give them a decided refusal. The marriage between her daughter and the dauphin had indeed been concluded, but at this moment she required all the influence of the Protestant lords in parliament to obtain the crown matrimonial, and the title of king for the dauphin. When, therefore, the petition was presented to her at Holyrood House, by Sir James Sandilands, the preceptor of the Knights of St John, she received it with respect, promised them that their proposals should have her anxious consideration, and in the meantime assured them of her protection.¹

Very different were the effects produced by this conduct on the Catholic clergy and the Lords of the Congregation. Grateful for her forbearance, and relying upon her promises, the Protestants abstained from all public exercise of their religion, and silenced one of their ministers who attempted to preach at Leith. But the Romanists arraigned the pusillanimity of the regent in condescending to temporise with heretics: and, in a convention which was held at Edinburgh soon after, loaded Erskine of Dun, who

supported the claims of the Congregation, with mingled threats and reproaches.²

Yet, after further consideration, they made some advances, towards a compromise. The terms, however, were such as the Protestants could not accept. It was insisted that the mass, purgatory, prayers to saints and for the dead, should remain parts of the established creed of the Church, which, if they granted, the reformers were to be allowed to pray and baptize in the vulgar tongue, provided these innovations were confined to their private assemblies.³

In the parliament which assembled at Edinburgh in December 1558—when, as we have already seen, the three estates received from the ambassadors who had returned from France an account of their proceedings—the leaders of the Congregation presented a supplication, to which they annexed some important requests, in their own name and that of their brethren. They desired that all acts of parliament by which churchmen were empowered to proceed against heretics should be suspended until the present controversies in religion were determined by a general council of the Church; and that, in the meantime, churchmen should be permitted only to accuse, but not to judge. Lest, however, this should seem to countenance licentiousness of opinion on sacred subjects, it was requested that all such as were accused of heresy should be carried before a temporal judge, should be permitted to speak in their defence, to state objections to witnesses, and to explain their own belief; nor ought they, it was added, to be condemned, unless proved by the Word of God to have erred from that faith which is necessary to salvation.⁴ On presenting these articles to the regent, she exerted all her influence to avert their immediate discussion in parliament. This, she contended, would be followed by exasperation on the part of the clergy, which might be fatal to

¹ Knox's History, pp. 126, 130. M'Crie's Knox, vol. i. p. 236. Keith, p. 80.

² Keith, p. 80.

³ Knex, pp. 129, 130.

⁴ Keith, p. 81.

the attainment of those great political objects for which she and the Protestant lords were alike anxious. "Let them," she said, "but wait for a brief season, and all their wishes might be accomplished; but at present it was evident that such a debate as was likely to follow their introduction would be dangerous and premature."

Convinced by such a representation, or at least anxious to avoid all appearance of obstinacy or precipitation, the Lords withdrew their Articles, and contented themselves with presenting a protestation, which was read in parliament. In this solemn instrument they alluded to the controversy which had of late years arisen between those called prelates and rulers in the Church and the nobles and commons of the realm, regarding the worship of God, the duty of ministers, and the right administration of the sacraments; they had already repeatedly complained, they said, that their consciences were burdened with unprofitable ceremonies, and many idolatrous abuses, and it was their intention to have sought in this present parliament the redress of such enormities. This resolution the troubles of the time had compelled them for a season to delay. Yet, fearful lest their silence should be misinterpreted, they now protested that since they could not at present obtain a just reformation, it should be lawful for them to use themselves in matters of religion and conscience as they must answer to God, and in the true faith which is grounded upon Holy Scripture: and this without incurring any danger of life and lands, for the neglect or contravening of such acts as had been passed in favour of their adversaries. In conclusion, they declared that no blame ought to attach to them if any tumult or uproar should arise among the subjects of the realm on account of diversity of religion, or if it happened that those abuses which had been so long neglected should at last be summarily or violently reformed.¹ It is

obvious, from the terms of this energetic paper, that the Congregation felt their own strength, and did not shut their eyes to those calamitous results in which a continuance of religious persecution might possibly involve the country. They were anxious for a quiet and temperate reform of those ceremonies which they alleged did violence to their conscience, and it was their wish to see removed, without any public tumult, the general profligacy which degraded the hierarchy; but it is also evident that they foresaw the probability of resistance, and were prepared to meet it; nor were they to be terrified into a renunciation of their belief by the prospect of any sufferings which awaited themselves or their country. They had prepared themselves for the worst—and it was fortunate they had done so, for at this crisis the accession of Elizabeth to the throne, and the alteration in the policy of the Guises, produced a sudden revolution in the mind of the queen-regent.

This princess, to resume the course of our history,² was now possessed of the great objects to which all her efforts had been so long directed. She had obtained the supreme power; her daughter the queen was married to the dauphin, and the title of King of Scotland, and the crown matrimonial, had been solemnly conferred upon him by the Scottish parliament. For the attainment of these objects, she had been greatly indebted to the assistance of the Protestant leaders. But she was also under obligations to France, especially to her brothers, the princes of the house of Guise; and these ambitious and unscrupulous men now claimed as a return that she should join that league for the destruction of the Protestants, and the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic faith in Europe, to which they had become parties with the Pope, the King of Spain, and the Emperor. As one part of their vast and unprincipled design, it was necessary to put down the Reformation in Scotland, and to secure the French ascendancy in that country;

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 120, 121. Knox, pp. 133, 134.

² See *supra*, p. 75.

and having accomplished this, they trusted it would be no difficult matter to expel Elizabeth from the throne, to place the crown on the head of Mary, the young Queen of Scotland, whom they had already induced to assume the title of Queen of England, and under her to unite the two kingdoms in the profession of the ancient faith.

These plans, and her expected co-operation in them, were communicated to the queen-regent, by Monsieur de Bettancourt, who arrived in Scotland on a mission from the King of France, soon after the conclusion of the peace of Cambrai.¹ (The disposition of Mary of Guise was inclined to moderate measures, and being attached to some of the leaders of the Protestants, to whose abilities and friendship she had been indebted, it was not without emotion and regret that she received the proposals of France.) But she was deeply attached to the Roman Catholic faith; she had been educated in a profligate court; her brothers, the cardinal and the duke, had acquired an extraordinary influence over her mind; the great body of the Papal clergy in Scotland urged upon her the necessity of adopting decided measures to check the rapid growth of heresy; and, after a feeble and unsuccessful remonstrance with the court of France, she abandoned her better resolutions, and resigned herself to the entire direction of the Guises.

This fatal change in the policy of the queen-regent was followed by an immediate collision between the Protestant and the Catholic parties. In a convention of the clergy which assembled at Edinburgh, (March 1559,) the Lords of the Congregation presented a petition, in which, in addition to their former demands, they now insisted that bishops should be elected with consent of the gentlemen of the diocese, and parish priests by the votes of the parishioners. To these they not only received a decided refusal, but the Synod, contrary to the spirit of

improvement and conciliation exhibited in the preceding year, declared that no language except the Latin could be used in the public prayers of the Church without violating its express decrees, and offering offence to the majesty of God. Nor was this all: the queen, with a rigour for which it is difficult to account, issued a proclamation for conformity of religion; all were commanded to resort daily to mass; and in an interview with some of the Protestant leaders she exhibited to them the injunctions she had received from France, warned them of the peril in which they stood, and summoned the most distinguished among the reformed ministers to appear before a parliament to be held at Stirling, and defend themselves from the accusations which were to be brought against them.²

Alarmed by these rash and unwise proceedings, the Earl of Glencairn, and Sir Hugh Campbell, sheriff of Ayr, requested an audience, in which they delivered a strong remonstrance. But when they besought her not to molest their preachers unless their doctrine could be proved to be repugnant to the Word of God, she broke into expressions of reproach and anger, declaring that their ministers should be banished though they preached as soundly as St Paul.³) Glencairn and Campbell calmly reminded her of the promises of toleration which she had made them. "Promises," she replied, "ought not to be urged upon princes unless they can conveniently fulfil them." So flagrant a doctrine was received by the Scottish Lords with merited indignation: to offer arguments against it would have been ridiculous; but they did not shrink from their duty. "If, Madam," said they, "you are resolved to keep no faith with your subjects, we will renounce our allegiance; and it will be for your grace to consider the calamities which such a state of things must entail upon the country."⁴

¹ Maitland, vol. ii. pp. 909, 910. Carte, vol. iii. p. 378. Melvill's Memoirs, pp. 77, 78, Bannatyne edit.

² Spottiswood, p. 120. Knox, p. 134. Keith, pp. 82, 83.

³ Keith, p. 82. Spottiswood, p. 121.

⁴ Ibid. Calderwood's MS. History, vol. I.

The boldness of this language produced a return to calmer reason, and she appeared willing to avert the storm; but at this moment the reformed opinions were publicly embraced by the town of Perth, and the queen, in great disturbance, commanded Lord Ruthven, the provost, to suppress the alleged heresy. His reply was, "That he could bring the bodies of his citizens to her grace, and compel them to prostrate themselves before her till she was fully satiate of their blood,—but over their consciences she had no power." She upbraided him for his "malapert" reply; commanded Dundee, Montrose, and all other places which had abjured the ancient faith, to be ready to attend mass and profess their adherence to the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church at Easter, and again summoned the preachers to appear at Stirling, to answer for their conduct, upon the 10th of May.¹

It was at this critical season that the adherents of the Reformation received an important accession of strength by the arrival of Knox in Scotland, (May 2, 1559.) The remonstrances which he had transmitted to the Lords of the Congregation from Dieppe had produced the most favourable effects; and in obedience to the second invitation, addressed to him in the month of November 1558, he now came to take his part with Willock, Douglas, and other preachers, who, during his absence, had laboured, at the peril of their lives, for the establishment of the truth. He found the cause of the Congregation in a condition very different from that in which he had left it at the period of his retreat from Scotland in 1557. Then the seed had indeed been sown, and in some places begun to spring up; but the Catholic party were predominant, and "matters had not yet ripened for a general reformation."² Now the Protestant faith was espoused by large masses of the people, professed by the most powerful of the nobles,

p. 310. British Museum, Ayscough, No. 4734.

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4734, fol. 311.

² M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. I. p. 192.

and in the event of attack it could look with some confidence to the countenance and support of England. But it acquired a wonderful accession of strength in the return of this bold, uncompromising, and eloquent adherent, who, without delaying in the capital, repaired directly to Dundee. Here, when he learnt the proceedings against the ministers, he earnestly required that he might be permitted to assist his brethren, and to make confession of his faith along with them,—a request which we may believe was readily granted.

It was now resolved by the leaders of the Congregation that they would accompany their preachers to Stirling, and the principal barons of Angus and Mearns took their journey for this purpose to Perth. They wore no armour, but declared, that they came as peaceable men, and solely to make confession of their faith, and to assist their ministers in their just defence.³ Lest their numbers might create alarm, Erskine of Dun, a grave and prudent man, noted for his early adherence to the reformed opinions, leaving his brethren in Perth, went forward to Stirling, and requested an interview with the queen. On this occasion the regent acted with much dissimulation: she listened with apparent moderation; and when the envoy assured her that the single wishes of the Congregation were to be permitted to worship God according to their conscience, and to secure liberty to their preachers, she declared that if the people would disperse, the preachers should be unmolested, the summons discharged, and new proceedings taken, which should remove all ground of complaint. Relying upon this promise, Erskine wrote to his brethren, who were at Perth; their leaders sent home the people; and it was expected that peace and toleration would be restored. But with the removal of the danger the regent thought it politic to forget her promises; and, with a precipitation which was as treacherous as it was short-sighted, the summons

³ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4734, fol. 311.

was continued ; the ministers who did not appear were denounced rebels, and all were prohibited, under the penalty of high treason, from receiving or supporting them.¹ Enraged at such perfidy, the Laird of Dun withdrew indignantly from court ; rejoined his brethren, who were still at Perth, excused himself for having too implicitly trusted a princess who, he was now convinced, was resolved upon their destruction, and warned them to prepare for those extreme measures which were meditated against them. His representations made a deep impression ; and Knox seized the moment to deliver to the people a sermon against idolatry, with all that fervid and impassioned eloquence for which he was so remarkable. He described how odious this crime appeared in the sight of God ; what positive commands had been given in Scripture for the destruction of its monuments ; and concluded by a denunciation of the mass, as one of the most abominable forms in which it had ever appeared to ensnare and degrade the human mind.²

It is by no means clear that the preacher, or the leaders of the Congregation who supported him, entertained at this moment any intention of exhorting the multitude to open violence ; on the contrary, the Congregation after the conclusion of the sermon quietly dispersed, and a few loiterers, or, to use Knox's expression, "certain godly men" alone remained in the church. Scarce, however, had the preacher retired, when a priest, with a spirit of hasty zeal, perhaps of ill-timed defiance, unveiled a rich shrine which stood above one of the altars, and disclosing the images of the Virgin and the Saints, prepared to celebrate mass. A youth, who had listened to Knox's exhortations, exclaimed that this was intolerable. He appealed to those who stood by, and conjured them not to permit that idolatry, which God had condemned, to be used in their despite and before their face.³ The priest, indignant at

the interruption, struck him, and he retaliated by casting a stone at the altar, which broke one of the images. In an instant all was uproar and confusion : those who till now had been only spectators, and whose minds, from the recent eloquence of Knox, were highly excited, broke in upon the shrine, tore down its ornaments, shivered it to pieces, and being joined by others whom the noise had attracted, demolished every monument or relic which they imagined to savour of idolatry in an incredibly short space of time, (May 11, 1559.) The confusion now increased, and they who had inflicted this summary vengeance being joined by the "rascal multitude," as Knox denominates them, rushed with headlong fury to the religious houses of the Gray and Black Friars. They seem to have found them deserted : no defence at least was made ; and in a few hours these magnificent edifices were spoiled of their wealth ; and their altars, confessionals, and every ancient and hallowed relic which adorned them torn down and defaced. The same fate was experienced by the Charterhouse or Carthusian monastery, a building of extraordinary strength and magnificence, of which within two days nothing was to be seen but the bare and melancholy walls. The first invasion or impulse appears to have been solely against "idolatry;" but although the preachers had been careful to warn their hearers not to put their hands to a reformation for covetousness' sake, the people, stimulated by the extraordinary wealth and luxury of the Gray Friars, began to spoil. No honest man, however, according to the words of Knox, was enriched to the value of a groat, "and the spoil was permitted to the poor." The probability seems to be that the poor took the liberty of helping themselves.⁴ Nor was this ebullition of popular fury confined to Perth ; the infection spread to Cupar, a small town which had embraced the Protestant opinions, and here similar excesses, though on a smaller scale, took place.

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 311. Keith, pp. 83, 84.

² MS. Calderwood, fol. 313, vol. i.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Printed Calderwood, p. 7. Spottiswood, pp. 121, 122. Knox, p. 136.

It was with feelings of deep resentment that the queen-regent heard of these violent and illegal proceedings. She lamented especially the destruction of the monastery of Carthusians, a royal foundation, and honoured by her as holding the ashes of James the First. In the first paroxysm of her anger she vowed vengeance against all who were connected with the disturbance, and declared her resolution to raze the town of Perth to the ground, and sow it with salt, as a monument of perpetual desolation.¹ These were not meant to be empty threats. She instantly summoned to her defence the Duke of Chastelherault, with Athole, and D'Osell, the French commander; she remonstrated with the leaders amongst the Congregation, who, though attached to the doctrines of the Reformation, were inimical to the excesses which had been committed; two of these, the Earl of Argyle and the Lord James, disclaiming all intentions of affording encouragement to rebellion, joined her with their forces; and on the 18th of May she advanced towards Perth, where the Protestants had begun to collect their strength. Soon after, they drew up three letters in justification of their proceedings. In the first, which was addressed to the queen-regent, they informed this princess that, although they had till now served her with willing hearts, they should be constrained, if she continued her unjust persecution, to take the sword of just defence. They were ready, they added, to obey their sovereign and her husband under the single condition that they might live in peace, and have the word of Jesus Christ truly preached, and His sacraments rightly administered. Without this they were determined never to be subject to mortal men. They declared that they were about to notify what they had done to their sovereign and the King of France; and they conjured her, in the name of God, and as she valued the peace of the realm, not to invade them till they had received

their answer.² The second letter of the Congregation, which was a more elaborate defence, was directed to the nobility of Scotland. They knew, they said, that the nobles were divided in opinion: some regarded them as a faction of heretics and seditious men who troubled the commonwealth, and against whom no punishment could be too severe; others were persuaded of the justice of their cause, nay, had for some time openly professed it, and, after having exhorted them to the enterprise, had deserted them in their extreme necessity. To the first they alleged that none could prove such offences against them: all that they had done being in obedience to God, who had commanded idolatry and its monuments to be cast down and destroyed. "Our earnest and long request," they continued, "hath been, and yet is, that in open assembly it may be disputed, in presence of indifferent auditors, whether that these abominations, named by the pestilent Papists religion, which they by fire and sword defend, be the true religion of Jesus Christ or not? Now, this our humble request being denied us, our lives are sought in a most cruel manner; and ye, the nobility, whose duty is to defend innocents and to bridle the fury and rage of wicked men, were it of princes or emperors, do, notwithstanding, follow their appetites, and arm yourselves against us, your brethren and natural countrymen. . . . If ye think that we be criminal because we dissent from your opinions, consider, we beseech you, that the prophets under the law, the apostles of Christ Jesus after His ascension, the primitive church and holy martyrs did disagree with the whole world in their days; and will ye deny but that their action was just, and that all those who persecuted them were murderers before God? May not the like be true this day? What assurance have ye this day of your religion, which the world had not that day of theirs? Ye have a multitude that agree with you, and so had they; ye have antiquity of time, and that they

¹ Knox, p. 137. MS. Calderwood, vol. i. pp. 313, 314.

² Keith, p. 86. 22d May 1559.

lacked not; ye have councils, laws, and men of reputation that have established all things, as ye suppose; but none of all these can make any religion acceptable before God, which only dependeth upon His own will, revealed to man in His most sacred Word. Is it not then a wonder that ye sleep in so deadly a security in the matter of your own salvation?" To the second class, those of the nobles who had first espoused their cause, and now deserted it, they directed an indignant remonstrance. "Unless," said they, "ye again join yourselves to us, we declare, that as of God ye are reputed traitors, so shall ye be excommunicated from our society, and from all participation with us in the administration of the sacraments. The glory of this victory, which God will give to His church, yea, even in the eyes of men, shall not appertain to you; but the fearful judgments that apprehended Ananias and his wife Sapphira, shall apprehend you and your posterity."¹ The spirit and contents of the third letter of the Congregation may be divined from its extraordinary superscription. It was directed, "To the generation of Anti-christ, the pestilent prelates, and their shavelings within Scotland." It contained a tremendous anathema against those who in their blind fury had caused the blood of martyrs to be shed; it warned them, that if they proceeded in their cruelty they should be made the subjects of a war of extermination such as Israel carried on with the Canaanites; it arrogated to themselves the appellation of the congregation of Christ; it stigmatised their opponents as the offspring of the man of sin; and concluded by uniting, in a manner which none can read without sorrow, expressions of extremest vengeance and wrath with the holy name of God, and the gospel of peace and love which was preached by His Son.²

It was not to be expected that such violent measures should be attended with pacific effects; the army of the Protestants was inferior to their opponents, and the queen-regent, confident

of victory, had disdainfully rejected all proposals of negotiation, when the arrival of Glencairn in the camp of the Congregation, at the head of two thousand five hundred men, induced her to hesitate. By the mediation of the Earl of Argyle and the Lord James a cessation of hostilities was agreed on. Both armies consented to disperse; the town was to be left open to the queen-regent; no person was to be troubled or brought to answer for the late changes in religion, termed by their authors the abolishing of idolatry; the religion begun was to be suffered to go forward; no Frenchman was to approach within three miles of the town; when the queen retired no French garrison was to be left within it; and in the meantime all controversies were to be reserved till the meeting of parliament.³

This treaty having been concluded, Willock, who had arrived with Glencairn, and Knox, who had remained at Perth since the demolition of the monasteries, sought an interview with Argyle and the Lord James, and upbraided them with their desertion of the brethren. They repelled the accusation with warmth, declared their steady attachment to the cause, but said that they had promised the queen to labour for peace, and that the terms which she had offered were too reasonable to be refused. If, however, she proved false to her word, they called God to witness that they would assist and concur with their brethren in all time to come.⁴ Satisfied with this explanation, Knox ascended the pulpit. It was right, he observed, before they left the scene of their labours, that all men should be exhorted to constancy and thankfulness. It had pleased God to stay the rage of the enemy without the effusion of blood; but he added, with that discernment into human motives and character with which he was eminently gifted, that he was well

³ These conditions of the capitulation are in the express words of *Knox*, p. 146, and *Spottiswood*, p. 122. *Hume* contends that the articles of capitulation were not violated, but, as it appears to me, on insufficient grounds.

⁴ *Knox*, p. 148

¹ *Knox*, pp. 139-141.

² *Keith*, p. 87.

assured the queen meant no truth, "that it became no brother to be weary or faint, since he was certain the treaty would only be kept till the regent and her Frenchmen became the strongest."¹

Profiting by these warnings, the Lords of the Congregation before they separated framed a new bond or Covenant, in which it was agreed "to unite together" in doing all things required of God in His Scripture that might be to His glory, and to put away all things that dishonoured His name, and hindered His pure and true worship. They solemnly obliged themselves to defend the Congregation or any of its members when trouble was intended against them, and they promised in the presence of God to spare neither labour, life, nor substance, in maintaining the liberty of the whole brethren, against whatever person should trouble them for the cause of religion, or any other cause thereon depending. This agreement was signed by the Earls of Argyle and Glencairn, the Lord James, Lord Boyd, Lord Ochiltree, whose daughter Knox afterwards married; and Matthew Campbell of Taringham.²

It was soon seen how necessary were these measures to the existence of the Protestants. They had left Perth on the 29th of May; that day the queen-regent entered the town; and, with the duplicity which Knox had anticipated, violated the promise which she had made. Chastelherault, D'Osell, and a body of French soldiers accompanied her; the chief magistrates who had been favourers of the Reformation were deprived of their authority; Charteris of Kinfauns, a man of profigate manners, was made provost; and many of the inhabitants abandoned their houses and submitted to a voluntary exile, rather than witness the re-establishment of that worship which they abhorred. It had been stipulated that Perth should not be left in the occupation of a French garrison; and the regent congratulated herself upon her ingenuity in observing the letter,

whilst she broke the spirit of the treaty. A body of troops in the pay of France, though natives of Scotland, were intrusted with the custody of the town; and the princess, when reminded of her engagements, of which the real meaning could not be easily misunderstood, defended her conduct on the common and untenable maxim that no faith was to be kept with heretics.

These dishonourable proceedings, however, produced important effects, and were favourable to the cause they were intended to destroy. The Earl of Argyle and the Lord James, faithful to their promise, deserted the regent, and departed secretly to St Andrews. Lord Ruthven, the Earl of Menteith, and Murray of Tullibardine, disgusted at the hypocrisy with which they had been treated, accompanied them; and on receiving a summons from the queen-dowager to repair instantly to court on pain of her highest displeasure, they answered that they dared not, with a safe conscience, be partakers of the manifest tyranny which was committed by her and her council, the prelates, against their brethren who professed a like faith with themselves.³ It was now no time for delay: letters were despatched by Argyle and the Lord James to the Lairds of Dun and Pitarrow, the Provost of Dundee, and others of their brethren, to assemble for the Reformation at St Andrews; and on the 4th of June they were joined, not only by many devoted brethren, but by Knox, who, in the short interval between this and the treaty of Perth, had preached with great success in Fife.

It is from this period of the assembly of the Protestants at St Andrews that we can discern the appearance of a new principle in their conduct. The defence of the country against the domination of the French troops, and the tyranny with which the regent wielded her military power, became a paramount object in their proceedings. They began to have a deeper insight than hitherto into the unprincipled schemes of France. In the efforts of

¹ Knox, p. 150.

² MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 324.

³ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. pp. 325, 326, 323, 334. 1st June 1559.

the queen-regent to put down the Reformation they believed that they saw a determination to overthrow the liberties of the country; and there can be little doubt that, whilst this feeling added strength to those whose predominating motive was the establishment of what they believed the truth, it induced others to join them, who, under other circumstances, would have remained quiet spectators of the struggle.

The zealous spirit and popular eloquence of Knox now found daily employment, and was followed by violent effects. After a sermon at Crail, a small sea town in Fife,¹ in which he exhorted his hearers to die like men, or to live and be victorious in the great struggle in which they were engaged, the multitude demolished the altars and images in the church, and the same scenes were repeated after an equally stirring address at Anstruther, another sea port not far distant.

But his greatest effort was reserved for St Andrews, the seat of the metropolitan of Scotland, and the scene which was associated in the mind of the reformer with his earliest labours and sufferings. The leaders of the Congregation, however, became apprehensive of the consequences which, in this centre of Romish pomp, might follow a public address. The archbishop, hearing that his cathedral was to be reformed, entered the town on Saturday evening with a hundred spears. He sent Colville of Cleish to inform Knox, that on his first appearance in the pulpit he should be saluted with a dozen culverins,² and the reformer was earnestly requested to be silent. But no persuasions of his friends, no threats of his enemies, could shake his resolution. He ascended the pulpit; chose as the subject of his sermon that portion of Scripture which describes our Saviour driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and delivered an address in his usual strain of familiar and in-

dignant eloquence. Whatever may have been his sentiments, or those of the leaders of the Congregation, as to the first excesses of the people, it was now evident that Knox, in a spirit of erroneous and misdirected zeal, no longer doubted that it was their duty, as professors of the truth, to put down by actual violence the idolatry which he condemned; to hazard all the evils of civil war and popular commotion, rather than suffer the alleged abominations of the Romish Church and the tyranny of the French faction to pollute the faith and endanger the liberty of the country. Animated by this feeling, he drew a parallel between the abuses of the Jewish worship and the corruptions of Popery; he explained to the magistrates and to the commonalty that it was their duty to imitate Christ's example, and remove all monuments of idolatry; and so ready were they to follow his instructions, that the congregation sallied from the sermon to the monasteries of the Dominican and Franciscan orders, and, encouraged by their chief magistrates, levelled these proud and wealthy edifices with the ground.³

In the midst of this destruction the archbishop flew to the queen-regent, who lay with her Frenchmen at Falkland. Inflamed by his account of the riot, the regent gave instant orders to advance upon St Andrews; and as Argyle and the Lord James were but slenderly accompanied, she trusted to assemble an army and crush them before they could receive assistance. But here she was mistaken. On the first knowledge of their danger, men flocked in so rapidly that, to use Knox's phrase, "they seemed to rain from the clouds;"⁴ and when the regent mustered her army, it was found that the Congregation, who had encamped on Cupar Moor, greatly outnumbered her. It was evident, too, that there were experienced officers amongst them. Their ordnance was judiciously placed, and the ground occupied by their horse

¹ Crail is on the coast, near the most eastern part of Fife.

² MS. Calderwood vol. i. p. 325. Knox's Hist., p. 149.

³ Keith, p. 91. M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. i. p. 269.

⁴ Knox, pp. 151, 152. MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 327.

and their infantry chosen with considerable military skill. Fearful of attacking them with an inferior force, the queen-regent again entered into a negotiation, and a truce of eight days was agreed on. It was stipulated that no Frenchman should remain within the boundaries of Fife, except the garrisons which, previous to the raising of the last army, lay in some of the coast towns; and that certain noblemen, appointed by the queen and council, should meet the leaders of the Protestants to decide on the best method for the restoration of peace to the country.

It was soon seen, however, that the single object of the queen-regent was to procure delay: no commissioners arrived at St Andrews, where the Lords of the Congregation for some days anxiously expected them. Accounts were brought in the meantime of the tyranny exercised by Charteris the provost and the garrison in Perth; and the Protestants, pitying the condition of their brethren, who had been driven from their houses to subsist on the charity of their friends, determined to assemble in force and expel the foreign troops from this city. Late events had taught them their own strength; habits of discipline, watchfulness, and active communication had been introduced by that sense of mutual danger which is the best instructor; and Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange, a soldier of great military experience and undaunted determination, had joined their party at this conjuncture. His accession was of much importance to the Congregation, and appears to have been the result rather of a wish to rescue his native country from becoming an appanage of France, than of a determination to overthrow the Romish faith. As early at least as March 1, 1557, he had expressed himself with the utmost indignation against the yoke of the Frenchmen, and had offered his services to restore Scotland to its former liberty, and to promote an amity with England.¹

¹ Sir N. Wotton to Lord Paget, privy-seal, and Sir William Petre, principal secretary;

Intimation had been sent to the brethren (so the Congregation were generally termed by their ministers) to assemble in the vicinity of Perth on the 24th of June; and so strongly did they muster on the day appointed that a summons was instantly given to the town, charging the garrison to abandon it, and commanding the provost to open the gates and leave it free to the subjects of the realm. On his refusal, and after a vain attempt by the regent to procure delay, the batteries were opened by Lord Ruthven on the west, and on the east quarter by the citizens of Dundee. It was evident, after the first discharge, that resistance would be vain; and the garrison, having stipulated that they should march out with military honours, delivered the town to the Congregation on Sabbath the 25th of June.²

This success, owing to the strength and importance of Perth, at that time one of the few fortified towns in Scotland, was highly encouraging to the Protestants. On the day of the capitulation public thanksgiving was returned to God for their victory; England it was hoped would espouse their cause more openly, and Knox, whose work against female sovereigns, or, as he termed it, the "Monstrous Regimen" of women, had made him odious to Elizabeth, addressed a remarkable letter to Secretary Cecil, in which he endeavoured to deprecate her resentment. He intended to have enclosed at the same time an epistle to the queen herself, but this he delayed, owing to the sudden departure of the messenger. "I understand," said he, in that honest and undaunted style of writing, which was unacceptable to the courtly taste of the English secretary, "I am become so odious to the queen's grace, and to her council, that the mention of my name is unpleasing in their ears; but yet I will not cease

MS. Letter, 1st March 1556-7, State-paper Office. French Correspondence, MS. State-paper Office, Sir William Kirkaldy to Sir William Cecil, 23d June 1559.

² MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 330. State-paper Office, Sir William Kirkaldy to Sir H. Percy, 25th June 1559.

to offer myself, requiring you, in God's name, to present to the queen's grace this my letter, smelling nothing of flattery, and therefore I hope it shall be the more acceptable. Why that either her grace, either that the faithful in her realm, should repute me as an enemy, I know no just cause. One thing I know, that England by me this day hath received no hurt, yea, it hath received, by the power of God working in me, that benefit which yet to none in England is known, neither yet list I to boast of the same: only this will I say, that when England and the usurped authority thereof was enemy to me, yet was I friend to it; and the fruit of my friendship saved the Borders in their greatest necessities. My eyes have long looked to a perpetual concord betwixt these two realms, the occasion whereof is most present, if you shall move your hearts unfeignedly to seek the same. For humility of Christ Jesus crucified, now begun here to be practised, may join together the hearts of those whom Satan, by pride, hath long dissevered: for the furtherance hereof I would have licence to repair towards you. God move your heart rightly to consider the estate of both the realms, which stand in greater danger than many do espy. The common bruit, I doubt not, carrieth unto you the troubles that be lately here risen for the controversy in religion. The truth is, that many of the nobility, the most part of barons and gentlemen, with many towns and one city, have put to their hands to remove idolatry and the monuments of the same. The Reformation is somewhat violent, because the adversaries be stubborn; none that professeth Christ Jesus with us usurpeth anything against the authorities, neither yet intendeth to usurp, unless strangers be brought in to subdue and bring in bondage the liberties of this poor country: if any such thing be espied, I am uncertain what shall follow."¹

The Lords of the Congregation were

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 28th June 1559, St Johnston, John Knox to Secretary Cecil.

now to discover that it is infinitely more easy to excite than to direct or to check the fury of the people. In the immediate vicinity of Perth was the ancient abbey church of Scone, regarded with peculiar reverence as the spot in which for many centuries the Scottish monarchs had held the ceremony of their coronation. Beside it stood the palace of the Bishop of Moray, a prelate of profligate life, and hated by the men of Dundee as a chief instrument in the martyrdom of Walter Miln. It was thought proper, therefore, that some "order" should be taken with him, and a message was sent by the leaders of the Congregation, requiring him to join them with his servants, otherwise they would neither spare nor save his abbey. He consented to this, and added that not only would he meet them with all his force, but vote with them against the clergy in parliament. But before this answer arrived the citizens of Dundee had seized their weapons, and rushed forward to the abbey, followed by Knox and their chief magistrate, who in vain attempted to restrain them. It was the earnest wish of the reformed and of the leaders of the Protestants to save both the palace and the abbey; and in this they at first so far succeeded that nothing but the images were pulled down. Argyle and Moray then drew off the multitude, and receiving intelligence in the evening that the queen-regent meditated to garrison Stirling, and pre-occupy the passes of the Forth, so as to prevent a junction between the northern reformers and their Lowland brethren, these two leaders made a rapid night march, took possession of the town, and, according to the expression then commonly used, purged it of idolatry. Their absence was fatal to Scone: some of the poor, in hope of spoil, and others with a lingering wish of vengeance, returned on the morrow and began to prowl about the abbey. The prelate in the interval had barricaded his mansion; his servants had armed themselves; and a citizen of Dundee approaching near the "Girnel" or granary, was thrust through with a

rapier by one, reported to be a son of the prelate. In a moment all was tumult; the air rang with shouts and cries of vengeance—the story flew to Perth—a multitude which no power could control attacked the ecclesiastical palace and the abbey—and within a few hours both were in flames:¹ many even of the most zealous of the brethren lamented this destruction, and Knox appears personally to have exerted himself to prevent it; but an aged matron who stood by viewed the scene with exultation and thankfulness. "Now," said she, "I see that God's judgments are just, and none can save where He will punish; since ever I can remember aught, this place hath been nothing else than a den of profligates, where these* filthy beasts, the friars, have acted in darkness every

sort of sin, and specially that most wicked man the bishop: if all knew what I know, they would see matter for gratitude, but none of offence."²

Although Argyle and the Lord James mustered only a small force at Stirling, the greater part of the army of the Congregation having returned to their homes, such was the terror inspired by the rapidity and decision of their movements, that on their advance to Linlithgow the queen-regent and the French forces evacuated the capital and retreated to Dunbar. The intelligence of this movement gave fresh spirits to the reformers, and having taken possession of Linlithgow, pulled down the images and destroyed the relics, they entered Edinburgh in triumph on the 29th of June 1559.

CHAPTER IV

MARY.

1559—1560.

THE occupation of the capital by the army of the Congregation was an event of great importance. It convinced the queen-regent that all hope of avoiding a civil war was at an end, unless she was prepared to agree to a total alteration of the established religion—it was equally decisive on the minds of the reformers. In the eye of the law they had gone too far in resistance to dream of retreat, and considerations of safety urged them to press forward in the work which they had begun. It becomes an interesting inquiry at this moment what was the exact object which they proposed to themselves; and fortunately we have their own evidence upon the subject. In an original letter from Sir William Kirk-

aldy of Grange, one of the ablest leaders of the Protestants, written to Sir Henry Percy, the day after they entered Edinburgh, he thus speaks:—"I received your letter this last of June, perceiving thereby the doubt and suspicion you stand in for the coming forward of the Congregation, whom I assure you you need not have in suspicion; for they mean nothing but reformation of religion, which shortly throughout the realm they will bring to pass, for the queen and Monsieur d'Osell, with all the Frenchmen, for refuge are retired to Dunbar. The foresaid Congregation came this last of June, by three of the clock, to Edinburgh, where they

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 331. Keith, p. 93.

will take order for the maintenance of the true religion and resisting of the King of France, if he sends any force against them. . . . The manner of their proceeding in reformation is this: they pull down all manner of friaries, and some abbeys, which willingly receive not the Reformation. As to parish churches, they cleanse them of images and all other monuments of idolatry, and command that no masses be said in them; in place thereof the Book set forth by godly King Edward is read in the same churches. They have never as yet meddled with a pennyworth of that which pertains to the Church, but presently they will take order throughout all the parts where they dwell that all the fruits of the abbeys and other churches shall be kept and bestowed upon the faithful ministers until such time as a further order be taken. Some suppose the queen, seeing no other remedy, will follow their desires, which is a general reformation throughout the whole realm conform to the pure Word of God, and the Frenchmen to be sent away. If her grace will do so, they will obey her, and serve her, and annex the whole revenues of the abbeys to the crown; if her grace will not be content with this, they are determined to hear of no agreement.”¹

At the same time that Kirkaldy directed this letter to Percy, with the object of explaining their real intentions, and quieting his fears regarding any hostile designs upon England, Knox addressed the English knight in the name of the whole Congregation. He entreated that through them a correspondence might be opened betwixt the faithful in both realms. “The troubles of this realm,” says he, “you hear, but the cause to many is not known. Persuade yourself, and assure others, that we mean neither sedition, neither yet rebellion against any just and lawful authority, but only the ad-

vancement of Christ’s religion, and the liberty of this poor realm. If we can have the one with the other, it will fare better with England; which, if we lack, although we mourn and smart, England will not escape without worse trouble.”² Soon after this Kirkaldy had a private meeting with Percy at Norham. The interview took place with the concurrence and under the directions of Cecil; and the Scottish baron having explained more fully the intentions of the Protestants, returned to them with the grateful intelligence that England was disposed to favour their views, and to enter into a league with them, for the attainment of their designs. The news was received with much exultation; and Grange, in a letter addressed to the English secretary, declares that “all Europe shall know that a league made in the name of God hath another foundation and assurance, than pactions made by man for worldly commodity.”³

There is every reason to believe that these letters contain an honest statement of the views of the Congregation. The establishment of the reformed religion in opposition to the Romish faith, the expulsion of the French troops from Scotland, and the conclusion of a league, offensive and defensive, with Elizabeth, were the great objects which they proposed to themselves. Nor, although they had agreed and acted upon the necessity of pulling down all religious houses which adhered to the ancient faith, were they as deeply inimical to Prelacy at this moment as they became not long after. They used the service-

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Knox to Sir Henry Percy, Edinburgh, 1st July 1559.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir William Kirkaldy to Cecil, Edinburgh, 17th July 1559. Also, State-paper Office, Knox to Cecil, 12th July 1559, Edinburgh. See also, original draft, State-paper Office, 8th July 1559, Sir William Cecil to Sir James Crofts.

“ . . . In any wise do your endeavour to kindle the fire, for if it should quench, the opportunity thereof will not arise in our lives; and that the Protestants mean to do would be done with all speed, for it will be too late when the French power cometh. To a wise man few words serve. . . . ” Also, Cecil to Mr Percy, 4th July 1559.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Wm. Kirkaldy to Sir Henry Percy, endorsed Cecil, Mr Kirkaldy to Sir Henry Percy, Edinburgh, 1st July 1559. Also, Cecil to Throgmorton. Forbes, vol. i. p. 155, and Lingard, vol. vii. p. 311.

book of King Edward the Sixth,¹ an extraordinary circumstance when we consider the violent opposition raised by Knox against the same form of liturgy, only a few years before, at Frankfort. Their hands were clean from any appropriation of ecclesiastical property; and on condition that the regent gave her consent to a general reformation, they were ready to annex the whole of the abbey lands to the crown, to be employed in the support of the faithful ministers of the Church. Their great fear was the arrival of a new army from France; they were aware that the warlike levies in that country were preparing against them; they dreaded the desertion of some amongst themselves, whose poverty exposed them to corruption;² and they were so well aware of the extreme caution and parsimony which marked the policy of Elizabeth, that they could not look with much confidence to her assistance, either in men or money.

Still they did not despair. The people were in their favour; the most powerful amongst the barons had espoused their cause; and Cecil's politics, though timid, were decidedly opposed to the establishment of anything like a permanent French influence in Scotland.

The Congregation, however, had a formidable enemy in the queen-regent. Could she but temporise and procure delay, she reckoned with confidence on the arrival of a large auxiliary force from France; and former experience had shewn that against this the irregular feudal infantry, which the Scottish barons brought into the field, was unable to contend for any length of time. She spread reports that her adversaries contemplated not only an alteration of the established religion, but a more daring change; that their great leader, the Lord James, aspired to the crown; and that,

under pretence of religious reformation, they sought to overturn the existing government.³ A proclamation to this effect was made in the name of Francis and Mary, king and queen of Scotland:—It arraigned the Protestants of sedition; accused them of having seized the irons of the Mint, and of maintaining a correspondence with England; and commanded all, under pain of treason, to depart from the capital, which they had violently entered. It declared at the same time that the regent had already offered to call a parliament, in which, by the advice of the estates of the realm, a universal order in religion should be established, and in the meantime had given a full liberty of conscience to her subjects.

These representations produced a considerable effect. Arran, the late regent, now Duke of Chastelherault, fell off from the Congregation; others grew lukewarm in the cause, and the leaders trembled for the overthrow of their party. In a letter to the queen they repudiated, with more indignation than consistency, the charge of rebellion; declared they would, in civil matters, conduct themselves as obedient subjects; and professed their sole object to be the promotion of God's glory, the defence of their preachers, and the destruction of idolatry.⁴

An attempt was soon after made to compose matters by negotiation, and commissioners from both sides met at Preston in Mid-Lothian; but the regent insisted not only that she should have the free exercise of her mass, but that wherever she came the Protestant preachers should be silent. To the last condition, which they justly contended would leave them without a church at all, it was impossible for the Lords of the Congregation to agree; yet, fearful of coming to extremities, they prolonged the conferences, and evinced an earnest desire for peace. This, however, did not prevent them from sending a letter to Queen Elizabeth, and at the same moment a more impassioned epistle to Cecil. This crafty minister had comforted them

¹ This important fact, which is now set at rest, has been much disputed, and some able writers have come to a contrary conclusion.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir William Kirkaldy to Cecil, 17th July 1559, Edinburgh.

³ Keith, p. 96.

⁴ Ibid.

by promises of assistance, should they be invaded by any foreign power, and had requested them to explain fully the purposes for which they had taken arms. "Our whole purpose," say they in reply, "is, as knoweth God, to advance the glory of Christ Jesus, and the true preaching of his Evangel, within this realm; to remove superstition, and all sorts of external idolatry; to bridle, to our power, the fury of those that have cruelly shed the blood of our brethren, and to our uttermost to maintain the liberty of this our country from the tyranny and thralldom of strangers."¹ The minister of Elizabeth, however, had pressed them upon a delicate point: the allegation of the queen-regent that they intended not only a change of religion, but of government. Their reply is remarkable. "True it is," they observe, "that as yet we have made no mention of any change in authority, neither yet hath any such thing entered in our hearts, except that extreme necessity compel us thereto. But perceiving that France, the queen-regent here, together with her priests and Frenchmen, pretend nothing else but the suppressing of Christ's Evangel, the maintenance of idolatry, the ruin of us, and the utter subversion of this poor realm, we are fully purposed to seek the next remedy: to withstand their tyranny, in which matter we unfeignedly require your faithful counsel and furtherance at the queen and council's hands, for our assistance."² Along with these letters, Knox addressed an apologetic epistle to Elizabeth, in which he declared that her displeasure conceived against him was a burden so grievous and intolerable, that, but for the testimony of a clean conscience, he would have sunk in desperation.³

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, in the handwriting of Knox, signed by Argyle, Glencairn, the Lord James, Ruthven, Boyd, and Ochiltree. Edinburgh, 19th July 1559. Addressed to Sir William Cecil.

² Ibid. See also MS. Letter from the same lords to Queen Elizabeth; also in the handwriting of Knox, dated Edinburgh, 19th July 1559.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Knox to Elizabeth, 20th July 1559. This letter is

It did not suit the policy of Cecil, in the uncertain state of the contest between the reformers and the Catholic party, to grant them immediate assistance, still less did he wish to see them put down, and peace established; and with this object of delay he directed a remarkable letter to the Congregation, in which he incited them to continue the struggle, and to weaken their principal enemies, the Popish clergy, by despoiling them of their riches. "Ye know," said he, "your chief adversaries, the Popish kirkmen, be noted wise in their generation; they be rich also, whereby they make many friends; by their wit with false persuasions, by their riches with corruption. As long as they feel no sharpness they be bold; but if they be once touched with fear, they be the greatest cowards. In our first reformation here in King Henry the Eighth his time, although in some points there was oversight for the help of the ministry and the poor; yet if the Prelacy had been left in their pompad wealth, the victory had been theirs. I like no spoil, but I allow to have good things put to good uses, as to the enriching of the crown, the help to the youth and the nobility, the maintenance of ministry in the Church, of learning in schools, and to relieve the poor members of Christ, being in body and limbs impotent. . . . But ye may say there is now no season to write of this: the present time requireth defence of yourselves. True it is—and this that I mentioned not impertinent thereto, and to me the more marvel,—that ye omit also such opportunity to help yourselves. Will ye hear of a strange army coming by seas to invade you, and seek help against the same, and yet permit your adversaries, whom ye may expel, to keep the landing and strength for others? Which of these two is easiest: to weaken one neighbour first, or three afterwards? . . . What will be the end, when these be

printed in Knox's History, p. 226, correctly, with the exception of the date, which ought to be 20th instead of 28th July, and this brief sentence, which occurs about the middle of the letter, "going to mass under your sister Mary her persecution of God's Saints." This sentence is not in the original.

the beginnings? Will they favour you in Scotland that burn their own daily in France? What may the Duke's Grace there look for, when his eldest son was so persecuted as, to save his life, he was forced to flee France and go to Geneva, not without great difficulty; his second brother, the Lord David, now cruelly imprisoned by Monsieur Chevigny, one chosen out to shew cruelty to your nation; divers Scots of the earl's family put to torture, and, finally, all the duchy of Chastelherault seised to the crown. And to shew you their purposed tragedy, the young queen so sweareth, so voweth, so threateneth, to destroy all the house of Hamiltons, as it is beyond all marvel to see your old regent there so enchant the Duke's ears as to hear nothing hereof. God open his heart according to his knowledge." In the end, Cecil assured them, that although the peace so lately concluded with France made it a matter of difficulty to decide how they were to be assisted, yet that Elizabeth could not but favour their purposes, and would neither neglect them nor see them quail.¹

Before this letter could arrive, conceived in too general terms to afford them any great encouragement, the regent, animated by the accounts she received of the daily desertions in the army of her opponents, advanced from Dunbar towards Edinburgh. The Lords of the Congregation found themselves too weak to defend the capital, and a truce was concluded between the two parties till the tenth of January. The reformers agreed to evacuate the town, deliver up the coining irons of the Mint, obey the regent, and abstain from all molestation of churchmen, or destruction of religious houses. The regent, for her part, permitted to the citizens of Edinburgh the free choice of their religion, gave full liberty of speech to the preachers, and promised that no persons should be molested, either in

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Original Draft in Cecil's handwriting, much erased and interlined.—Endorsed, "Copy of my Letter to the Earls of Argyle, Glencairn, Prior of St Andrews, Lords Boyd and Ochiltree, 28th July 1559." See also Knox's History, pp. 225-228.

their persons or estate, on account of their faith. It was lastly stipulated, that no men of war, either French or Scots, should be placed in garrison within the town.²

Such were the conditions agreed on and signed by the Duke, the Earl of Huntly, and D'Osell, to whom the negotiation was intrusted by both parties. It is asserted, however, by Knox,³ that these were not the articles to which the brethren consented; and before leaving the town they issued a proclamation, in which they artfully omitted everything which would have been prejudicial to their own party, and added some conditions not to be found in the written appointment.⁴

On neither side was this convention expected to lead to any permanent pacification. The regent was now in daily hopes of having succour from France; her representations of the state of Scotland had produced a strong sensation in that country; and Sir James Melvill, who had been brought up from early youth in the service of the constable, Montmorency, was sent from Paris on a secret mission into that country, to examine the state of parties, and ascertain whether the accusation of the regent, that the Lord James⁵ aimed at the crown, had any foundation in fact. Melvill was, probably, from his connexion with the constable, predisposed to favour the cause of the Congregation; and the manner in which he executed his commission argues either extreme simplicity, or a predetermination not to seek the truth. On his arrival, repairing to the Lord James, he interrogated him whether he meditated any designs against the throne; and being assured by this able leader that nothing could be farther from his intention—his desire, and that of his associates, being only to obtain liberty of conscience,—the ambassador returned through England into France perfectly satisfied

² Keith, p. 99.

³ Knox, p. 166.

⁴ Keith p. 99. Knox, p. 166. And MS. Proclamation, State-paper Office, backed by Cecil, 25th July, Proclamation of the Congregation.

⁵ This young and ambitious nobleman was the queen's natural brother, and afterwards the celebrated Regent Moray.

upon the subject.¹ That Moray at this moment encouraged any such daring project may be doubted, but certainly he was not likely to criminate himself upon so serious an accusation.

The death of Henry the Second of France took place during this mission, and on his return to France Melvill found the Guises triumphant, and nothing but threats of war and vengeance against the party of the Congregation in Scotland. Nor could this change of views remain for any time a secret in that country, or in the court of Elizabeth: the Protestant faction in France kept up an intimate and constant correspondence with their brethren in Scotland; Cecil, by his secret agents, was fully informed of the intrigues of the French cabinet; and both were prepared to watch and to resist, when necessary, the meditated designs, not only against the reformed opinions, but against England itself. Previous to their leaving the capital, in conformity to the late convention, the brethren proclaimed by sound of trumpet the conditions which they had accepted, and added, that if any of these should be violated the leaders of the party would assist their friends, as they had already done, with their whole power, and zealously contend for the glory of God, and the relief and defence of every member of the true Congregation.²

From Edinburgh the chiefs of the Protestants retired to Stirling, where, dreading the craft of their adversaries, who had endeavoured to sow jealousies amongst them, they entered into a new bond, by which they engaged that none of them should receive any message from the regent, without imparting it to the rest, and holding a consultation on the proposals it conveyed.³ From the same city Knox was despatched to Berwick, where he

¹ Melvill's Memoirs, Bannatyne edit. pp. 81, 82. Melvill arrived when the army was arrayed in order of battle on Cupar Moor. This was on the 12th of June 1559. See Keith, p. 91.

² MS. State-paper Office. Proclamation of the Congregation, Edinburgh, 25th July 1559. It is backed by Cecil, and dated 31st July 1559.

³ August 1, 1559. Keith, pp. 100, 101,

had a secret interview with Sir James Crofts the governor.⁴ It appears, from the original instructions committed to this indefatigable reformer, that his mission was almost warlike. He proposed to seize and garrison Stirling, provided the English would send money for the payment of the troops, describing it as "the key and principal place" which might separate the northern part of the kingdom from the south. He represented that some assistance by sea would be required for the safety of Dundee and Perth, and suggested the fortification of Broughty craig, to which work the barons in its neighbourhood, who were zealous for the cause, would give every assistance. He pointed out the necessity of the fort of Eyemouth being seized by England, to prevent its occupation by the French; and he required the queen's majesty to influence the Kers, Homes, and other borderers, in favour of their party. Under the term "comfortable support," which the Congregation looked for from Elizabeth, he explained that not only soldiers must be sent, and men and ships be ready to assist them if assaulted, but "that some respect must be had to some of the nobility, who were not able to sustain such households as now, in the beginning of these troubles were requisite,—the practice of the queen-regent being to stir up enemies against every nobleman, even in the parts where he remaineth."

In plainer terms, the Scottish nobility, who had joined the cause of the Congregation, were anxious, like their predecessors under Henry the Eighth, to receive pensions from England. On such conditions the reformers, Knox declared, were ready to enter into a strict league with Elizabeth, to bind themselves to be enemies to enemies, and friends to friends, and never to agree with France without the consent of that princess; he lastly observed, that although the league was

⁴ Knox came to Berwick on the 3d Aug. 1559, and on the night of the same day returned with Alexander Whitelaw into Scotland. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir James Crofts to Cecil, in cipher, with the decipher, dated Berwick, 4th Aug. 1559.

as yet only proposed to the Privy-council of Scotland, so anxiously was it desired by the whole barons, that they accused the council of negligence for having so long delayed it.¹

In this mission, Knox, who was accompanied by Alexander Whitelaw, an adherent of the party, incurred considerable personal risk, their little convoy having been furiously attacked by the French garrison of Dunbar.² He returned, however, to Stirling in safety, but mortified by the cold and dilatory policy of Elizabeth, who, whilst she avoided giving them immediate assistance, did not scruple to throw suspicion upon their motives, and to act with an inconsistency and mystery which put them at fault. She addressed a letter to the queen-dowager, full of the most earnest wishes for the preservation of peace between the two countries; yet she accused the leaders of the Congregation of lukewarmness and inactivity, in not rising against her authority, expressing her astonishment that they had not more vigorously exerted themselves for the great objects they had in view. It was her desire, as far as we can discover it, to incite them to revolt against the established government, but herself to incur no expense or risk. In her instructions to Sir Ralph Sadler, whom at this time she determined to send on a mission into Scotland, he was directed to "nourish the faction betwixt the Scots and the French, so that the French may be better occupied with them, and less busy with England; whilst he was to explore the very truth whether the Lord James did mean any enterprise towards the crown of Scotland for himself or not."³

¹ MS. Instructions, State-paper Office, 31st July 1559, in the hand of Knox. These Articles and Instructions appear to have been left by Knox with Sir James Crofts, to be shewn to Sir Henry Percy, whom he had no time to see; and to Cecil, to whom he thought it superfluous to write, having, as he says, opened the whole case to Sir J. Crofts. They have never been printed, and throw much light upon a period which, in Knox's own history, is perplexed and obscure.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Knox to Sir J. Crofts, 6th Aug. 1559.

³ MS. Instructions, State-paper Office, 8th

These strange delays and suspicions irritated the reformers; and their leaders, the Lord James and the Earl of Argyle, addressed letters of remonstrance to Crofts, governor of Berwick, and to Cecil, in which they complained of the treatment they had experienced. To be judged slow, negligent, and cold in their proceedings, gave them, they declared, great distress. "Ye are not ignorant, sir," said they, addressing Crofts, "how difficult it is to persuade a multitude to the revolt of an authority established. The last time that we were pursued our enemies were in number thrice more than we, besides that the castle of Edinburgh declared plain enemy to us at our uttermost necessity, which was one cause of our appointment. . . . Our strength, substance, and number being considered, we mean nothing but plain simplicity, and a brotherly conjunction without long delay, for we hate all doubles."⁴ In terms equally strong, Knox, in a letter sent at the same time (6th August 1559) to Sir James Crofts, arraigned the delay and suspicions of the English Privy-council. "I must signify to you," said he, "that unless the council be more forward in this common action, ye will utterly discourage the hearts of all here, for they cannot abide the crime of suspicion; they will not trifle: but if they cannot have present support of them, they will seek the next remedy (not that I mean that ever they intend to return to France) to preserve their own bodies, whatsoever become of the country, which our enemies may easily occupy; and when they have so done, make your account what may ensue towards yourself."⁵

It was the policy of Elizabeth at this time to distress France through Scotland. The establishment of the Reformation, according to the model Aug. 1559. Backed in Cecil's hand, Sir Ralf Sadler.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, backed by Cecil, Earl of Argyle, and Prior of St Andrews to Sir James Crofts, 6th August 1559, Stirling. It is signed by both Argyle and Moray, but the body of the letter is in the handwriting of Knox.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Knox to Sir J. Crofts, 6th August 1559

dictated by the stern anti-prelatical opinions of Knox, was not the aim to which she directed her efforts: she hated the man,¹ and considered the book which he had written against female government an audacious and inexpiable offence. No concessions or explanations could disarm her resentment; she forbade him to set foot within her dominions; and to his repeated applications that he might be permitted to preach in the north of England, Cecil, her minister, was compelled to turn a deaf ear. Nor is this any matter of wonder, when we consider that the individual attachments of this princess were strongly on the side of Romanism, and that Knox considered the Reformation in England as scarcely one remove from Popery. But although lukewarm in the cause of the Reformation, and desirous of peace with France, she was well aware of the gigantic schemes of ambition conceived by the house of Guise. Her jealousy had been roused to the last degree by the attack upon her right to the throne, and assumption of her arms and title, which had been early made by the Queen of Scots; and she dreaded the effect which the establishment of French influence and the overthrow of the party of the Congregation must produce upon the great body of her Roman Catholic subjects in England and Ireland.

Under these circumstances, without actually breaking with France, she encouraged the Protestants to revolt against the authority of the queen-dowager; and, in reply to their repeated applications for money, Cecil hinted in his letters, as we have already seen, that they ought not to neglect the opportunity now afforded them to strip the Romish Church of its pomp and wealth, and apply "good things to good uses."² It is important to attend to the reply made by the Lord James and Argyle (in name of the rest of the brethren) to such advice. "We are not ignorant," they said,

¹ Sadler, vol. i. pp. 569, 570. Also, *Ibid.*, 532, 535.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, quoted above, (p. 103), 28th July 1559.

"that our enemies, the Popish kirk-men, are crafty, rich, malicious, and bloodthirsty, and most gladly would we have their riches otherwise bestowed. But, consider, sir, that we have against us the established authority, which did ever favour you and Denmark both, in all your reformatiōns; and therefore, that without support we cannot bring them to such obedience as we desire. The danger imminent by the army prepared against us in France, moved us first to seek your support, and after to send our other messenger, Maister Knox, with fuller instructions to Sir James Crofts, which we suppose ye have received.³

. . . . We have tempted the Duke by all means possible, but as yet of him have no certainty other than a general promise that he will not be our enemy. . . . We cease not to provoke all men to favour our cause, and of our nobility we have established a Council; but suddenly to discharge this authority⁴ till that ye and we be fully accorded, it is not thought expedient."⁵

From this avowal it is evident that the intentions of the Congregation had undergone a material alteration. Some little time before⁶ they had declared in their letter to Cecil that any alteration in authority, by which we must understand a revolt against the queen-dowager for the purpose of introducing a change in the civil government of the country, had not entered into their hearts, unless extreme necessity compelled them to it; their single purpose being to advance the glory of Christ, to remove superstition and idolatry, and to maintain the liberty of their country against the tyranny of strangers: the remonstrances and encouragement of Elizabeth had now effected an important

³ This alludes to the instructions quoted above in p. 104, dated 31st July 1559. MS. State-paper Office.

⁴ "To discharge this authority:" the phrase appears to be equivalent to "the renunciation of their allegiance and setting up a rival government."

⁵ MS. State-paper Office, 13th August 1559, Glasgow. Subscribed, your loving and assured friends, in the name of the rest.

* On the 19th July 1559.

change. They had earnestly laboured to seduce the Duke of Chastelherault from his allegiance, with a view, probably, of restoring him to the regency; they had established a Council; and only waited a full agreement with England to depose the queen-dowager from her authority, and substitute some more favoured individual of their own party in her stead.

Who this should be was a question which did not fail to present itself to the English court, and Elizabeth seems to have looked to two noble persons. The first was the Earl of Arran, eldest son to the Duke of Chastelherault, next heir to the crown after the young queen, and lately Captain of the Scottish Guard in France. Having embraced the opinions of the reformers, and engaged in intrigues with England, he had become an object of suspicion to the French government, which had stript him of his preferments, and was about to throw him into prison when he escaped to Geneva. It had early occurred to Cecil that the presence of this young nobleman in Scotland would be useful as a check on the influence of the queen-dowager. Letters were, therefore, sent to recall him home, and every means taken to persuade his father to resist the regent. In Elizabeth's instructions to Sir Ralph Sadler, when she was about to send him into that country,¹ this minister was directed to exhort the duke, for "preservation of the expectant interest which he hath to the crown if God call the young queen before she have issue, to withstand [resist] the governance of that realm by any other than the blood of Scotland." He was directed to quote the late example of the King of Spain, who, although husband to the Queen of England, committed no charge of any manner of office, spiritual or temporal, to a stranger; and of his father, Charles the Fifth, who governed his countries of Flanders and Brabant by their own nation; and to warn Arran that the French, under pretence of putting down the Reformation, would never

be satisfied till they had subjugated the realm, and utterly extirpated his house.² Neither the duke, however, nor his son, the Earl of Arran, possessed abilities sufficient for the high and difficult part thus allotted to them. Chastelherault, timid, irresolute, and indolent, was content to be neutral, and coveted repose. On the other hand, Arran his son was willing enough to engage in any schemes which promised advantage to himself, and his ambition even aspired so high as to a marriage with the English queen; but the vigour, ability, and self-command requisite in the leader of a party were completely wanting in this young nobleman. Vain, passionate, and capricious, his designs were adopted without consideration, and upon the first appearance of difficulty abandoned with precipitation and disgust. All this weakness, however, was not yet discovered, and for the present he was employed and flattered with the hopes of advancement.

But Elizabeth, and, still more, her able minister, Cecil, had their eye upon another and a very different person,—the Lord James, natural son of James the Fifth, afterwards the noted Regent Moray, and regarded even at this time, when he had not completed his twenty-sixth year,³ as the most influential leader in the Congregation. There is every reason to believe that his attachment to the principles of the Reformation was sincere, and that at first he proposed no other end in taking so prominent a lead than to procure liberty of conscience and the free exercise of his religion for himself and his adherents. But personal ambition and the love of power were deeply planted in his character; his mind was one of no ordinary cast; and when he began to busy himself in public life a very short period sufficed to make him feel his talents, and take pleasure in the eminence they conferred upon him. Educated for the Church, first in his

² MS. Instructions. State-paper Office, 8th August 1559. Backed in Cecil's hand, Sir Ralf Sadler. Memorial of things to be imparted to the Queen's Majesty.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Randolph to Killigrew, April 1560. Backed by Cecil.

own country and afterwards at the schools in France, he acquired habits of study, and a cultivation of mind superior to the barons by whom he was surrounded. He had early attached to himself some of those able and unscrupulous men, who at this time were to be found in the profession of the law or in the Church—men who combined the craft and intrigue of civilised life with the ferocity of a still feudal age. But whilst he used their assistance, his own powers of application were so great as scarcely to require it; his acquaintance with European politics, superior to most of those with whom he acted, enabled him to transact business, and conduct his correspondence with uncommon clearness, brevity, and precision. His knowledge of human nature was profound: he possessed that rapid intuitive insight into the dispositions of those with whom he acted which taught him to select with readiness, and to employ with success, those best calculated to carry forward his designs; and it was his peculiar art to appear to do nothing, whilst, in truth, he did all. There was a bluntness, openness, and honesty about his manner which disarmed suspicion, and disposed men to unbosom themselves to him with equal readiness and sincerity; yet when the conference was ended, they were often surprised to find that the confidence had been altogether on one side; they had revealed their own purposes, and Moray, with all his apparent frankness, had betrayed none of his secrets. There is, perhaps, no kind of man more dangerous in public life than he who conceals matured purposes under a negligent and careless exterior; and if to this we add, that his talents in war were of a superior order—that he was brave, almost to rashness, that his address was dignified, and his countenance noble and kingly, we shall be at no loss to comprehend the extraordinary influence which such a man had acquired, not only over his own party, but in England and on the Continent.

It had begun to be whispered in

France, as we have seen, and at the English court, that Moray aimed secretly at the crown. When Cecil drew up his instructions for Sir Ralph Sadler, he was directed to investigate whether the Lord James, whose power with the Congregation appeared to be daily on the increase, did really look so high; and it was added, “if he do, and the duke be found very cold in his own causes, it shall not be amiss to let him follow his own device therein, without dissuading or persuading him anything therein.”¹ A letter written a few days after this by Knox to Sir William Cecil describes the condition of the reformed party, and their anxiety for assistance from England, in strong terms. “The case of these gentlemen standeth thus: that unless without delay money be furnished to pay their soldiers, who in number are now but five hundred, for their service by past, and to retain another thousand footmen, with three hundred horsemen for a time, they will be compelled every man to seek the next way for his own safety. I am assured (as flesh may be of flesh) that some of them will take a very hard life before that ever they compone either with the queen-regent or with France; but this I dare not promise of all, unless in you they see greater forwardness to their support. To aid us so liberally as we require, to some of you will appear excessive, and to displease France to many will appear dangerous; but, sir, I hope that ye consider that our destruction were your greatest loss, and that when France shall be our full master (which God avert) they will be but slender friends to you. Lord Bettancourt² bragged in his credit after he had delivered his menacing letter to the prior,³ that the king and his council would spend the crown of France, unless they had our full obedience. I am assured, that unless they had a farther respect they would not buy our poverty at that price.

¹ MS. State Paper Office, Aug. 8, 1559. Backed by Cecil, Sir Ralf Sadler.

² The Sieur de Bettancourt, ambassador from the French court. See postea, p. 110.

³ The Lord James. He was Prior of St Andrews.

They labour to corrupt some of our great men with money; and some of our number are so poor, (as before I wrote,) that without support they cannot serve. Some they threaten, and against others they have raised up a party in their own country. In this meantime, if you lie as manacled, what will be the end you may easily conclude. Some of the council, immediately after the sight of your letters, departed, not well appeased. The Earl of Argyle is gone to his country for putting order to the same, and mindest shortly to return with his force, if assurance be had of your support; and likewise will the gentlemen in these lower parts put themselves in readiness to enterprise the uttermost, if ye will assist with them; and therefore, in the bowels of Christ Jesus, I require you, sir, to make plain answer what they may lippen¹ to, and at what time their support shall be in readiness. Some danger is in the drift of time: in such matters ye are not ignorant. It was much marvelled that the queen's majesty wrote no manner of answer, considering that her good father, the most noble and most redoubted of his time, disdained not, lovingly, to write to men fewer in number and far inferior in authority and power, than be those that wrote to her Grace."² This concluding sentence is worthy of notice, for Knox evidently alludes to the correspondence of Henry the Eighth with the murderers of the Cardinal Beaton; and his expressions go far, I think, to intimate his approval of their conduct and of Henry's encouragement of them.

These strong representations had

¹ To lippen—to trust.

² Original MS. Letter, State-paper Office, St Andrews, 15th August 1559, backed in Cecil's hand, Mr Knox. I have gone into greater length in this part of the History, which involves the causes and motives connected with the early annals of the Reformation, because many of the letters which I have given were unknown to Dr M'Crie, others have been printed in his Life of Knox, but incorrectly, with many passages omitted, (owing to his not having had the originals before him,) and the period, one of great importance, has been far too slightly treated by our general historians.

the desired effect. Sir Ralph Sadler was sent to Berwick for the purpose of managing the correspondence between the reformers and the English court.³ He assured them of immediate pecuniary assistance, and carried with him £3000,⁴ which Elizabeth directed to be applied with such secrecy and discretion as not to impair the treaties of peace lately concluded with Scotland.⁵ On his arrival, he found a messenger from Knox, by whom he was assured that if the queen would furnish them with money to pay a body of fifteen hundred arquebuses, and three hundred horse, they would soon not only expel the French from Scotland, but achieve their whole purpose.⁶ Some little time after this,⁷ Balnaves, a zealous adherent of the Congregation, and an intimate friend of Knox, repaired privately to Berwick, where he held a long consultation with Sir Ralph Sadler, and fully explained the views of the Protestants. He assured him that the breach between them and the queen-regent was now incurable; that having advanced so far in their resistance, they must go forward with the matter or lose their lives; that whatever pretence they made, the principal mark they shot at was to introduce an alteration of the state and authority, to depose the regent, place the supreme power in the hands of the duke, or his son the Earl of Arran, and then enter into open treaty with England according to the exigency of the case. So well satisfied was Sadler with the representations of this zealous partisan, that he paid him £2000, to be delivered to the leaders of the Congregation for the maintenance of their troops, and assured him that some steps should be taken for the relief of Kirkaldy, Ormiston, Whitelaw, and others. These men, it appears, were in distress, owing to the sums they had already spent in this service, and to their pensions from

³ 20th August 1559.

⁴ As to the mode in which the money was to be advanced to the Protestants, see Sadler, vol. i. p. 439.

⁵ Sadler's State Papers, by Scott, vol. i. pp. 392, 399. ⁶ Ibid., p. 400.

⁷ 8th September 1559.

France having been stopped since they had taken part with the Congregation.¹

It happened by a singular coincidence that whilst these schemes for the advancement of Arran formed the subject of a midnight conference in the castle of Berwick, that young earl himself alighted at the gate only three hours after the entrance of Balnaves; but all was managed so secretly that both were for some time under the same roof without being aware of the circumstance. It was judged right, however, that they should meet, and after a brief but joyful interview Balnaves departed, under cover of night, to Holy Island; from which, carrying the money with him, he arrived at the head-quarters of the Congregation. Arran, having disguised himself, assumed the name of Monsieur de Beaufort, and passed into Teviotdale, from whence he was conducted to his father in the castle of Hamilton.² Yet all this was transacted, according to the express directions of Cecil, with such secrecy that for some time it was not known that he was in Scotland.³

This assistance from Elizabeth came very opportunely to enable the Congregation to resist the decided measures of France and the queen-regent. In the beginning of August, the Sieur de Bettancourt had arrived from the French court. He assured the queen that an army, commanded by her brother, the Marquis d'Elbeuf, would speedily embark for Scotland. He brought letters from the King and Queen of France to the Lord James, whom they regarded as the chief leader of the Protestants. They reminded him of the benefits he had received from France, upbraided him with his ingratitude, and threatened him with absolute ruin if he persisted in his rebellious courses. To these accusations Moray directed a temperate, though an insincere reply. He pro-

fessed himself to be solely actuated by a zeal for the truth and the glory of God; and he declared for himself and the rest of the Congregation that, except upon the subject of religion, they would be faithful to their sovereign, and detested the crime of sedition.⁴

Preparations for war now rapidly advanced. In the end of August a force of a thousand men, under the command of an Italian officer named Octavian, had disembarked at Leith, and with these the queen-dowager began to intrench and fortify that port. She despatched their leader back to France, with an earnest request for a larger reinforcement; she warned the French court that her adversaries were in active correspondence with England, Germany, and Denmark; stated the necessity for immediate exertion before they were allowed to concentrate their strength, and assured them that, with four ships of war to cruise in the Firth, an additional thousand men, and a hundred barbed horse, she would undertake to reduce the kingdom to peace.⁵ This, however, was not so easily effected. The people had been long dissatisfied with the French troops, whose stay in Scotland was expensive and troublesome. The partiality of the regent to her own nation had excited disgust; the reformed preachers perambulated the country, and in their discourses won the people to their devotion, not only on the great subject of religion, but so eloquently declaimed against the alleged conspiracy of the regent for the subjugation of the realm under a foreign yoke, that the arrival of a new auxiliary force was viewed with the utmost jealousy and aversion.⁶ A more pacific mission, indeed, succeeded this warlike demonstration, consisting of the Bishop of Amiens and two learned doctors of the Sorbonne; but although this foreign prelate came as legate &

¹ Sadler, vol. i. pp. 434, 435. Arrival of the French. Sadler, vol. i. p. 403-411. Keith, pp. 101, 102.

² Sadler, vol. i. pp. 435, 450, 461.

³ For Arran's arrival, 16th September see Sadler, vol. i. p. 447.

⁴ Knox, p. 167. Spottiswood, p. 131.

⁵ Keith, p. 102.

⁶ British Museum, Caligula, book x. fol. 38. MS. Letter, Henry Balnaves to Sir R. Sadler and Sir J. Crofts, Stirling, 22d September 1559.

latere from the Pope, and his companions earnestly laboured to reconcile the reformers to the ancient faith, their united efforts to “purge the church and the people from heretical pollutions” were unavailing. Nor was the legate completely a messenger of peace, for along with him came La Brosse, a French officer, two hundred men,¹ and a company of eighty horse.²

Both sides now resolved on war; and on the arrival of Arran a secret consultation having been held at Hamilton with the principal leaders of the Congregation,³ the duke, who had hitherto been neutral, agreed to join their party, and signed those covenants by which they bound themselves to subvert the Roman Catholic faith, to overturn the government of the regent, and to expel the French from the country.⁴ A message was then transmitted to the queen, requiring her to desist from the fortification of Leith; to which she answered with spirit, that it was as lawful for her daughter to strengthen her own seaport, without asking leave of the nobility, as for the duke to build at Hamilton, nor would she stay her proceedings unless compelled by force. This challenge on the part of the reformers was premature and ill-judged. They could not, at the earliest, assemble their whole force before the 15th of October; they were not certain of a second supply of money from England; the duke, although now one of their party, was timid and irresolute; Argyle was occupied in a struggle against Macconnell in his own country; and Huntly, although disposed to favour their proceedings, was not yet separated entirely from the queen-regent. Instead, therefore, of being

able to follow up their warlike message by any hostile attack, they contented themselves with the occupation of Broughty Craig, a strong fortified castle at the mouth of the Tay, and granted a commission to Glencairn and Erskine of Dun to recommence their proceedings against the religious houses, by suppressing and purging the abbey of Paisley of idolatry.⁵

Soon after this their cause gained an important accession. Thomas Randall or Randolph, afterwards Sir Thomas Randolph, who had become acquainted with the Earl of Arran at Geneva, at the earnest request of this young nobleman was sent after him into Scotland. What was the particular tie which attached so able and busy an intriguer as Randolph to the fortunes of Arran, does not appear; but Cecil lost no time in seconding his wishes; and the presence of this English agent, who arrived with much secrecy at Hamilton in the end of September,⁶ was of essential service in imparting energy and promptitude to the measures of the reformers. But this was not all: Maitland of Lethington, the secretary to the queen-regent, a man whose talents as a statesman were of the highest order, and who had long professed himself a friend to the reformed doctrines, now secretly joined their party; and although he openly adhered to the queen, betrayed her councils and most private affairs to her enemies.

Matters now proceeded with more decision and rapidity.⁷ On the 15th of October the Congregation assembled their force. It amounted to twelve thousand men, and next day they advanced to Edinburgh, which they occupied without resistance, the regent having retired within the fortifications of Leith. One council for civil affairs and another for matters of religion were then appointed.⁸ In the first were included the duke, his son

¹ Sadler, State Papers, vol. i. pp. 417, 464, 470, 475.

² Ibid., p. 474.

³ Sadler, vol. i. p. 465. Also, pp. 500, 507.
⁴ Ibid., p. 498. MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 383.

⁵ Original, State-paper Office, backed by Cecil, 10th November 1559. Intelligence out of Scotland

⁶ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, book x. fol. 38. Henry Balnaves to Sadler and Crofts, 22d September 1559.

the Earl of Arran, the Earls of Argyle and Glencairn, the Lord James, with the Lords Ruthven, Boyd, Maxwell, the Laird of Dun, Henry Balnaves, Kirkaldy of Grange, and the Provost of Dundee. The second for religion embraced Knox, Goodman, and the Bishop of Galloway, who had renounced his former faith, and embraced the principles of the Protestants. They next addressed a letter to the queen, requiring her instantly to command all foreigners and men-at-arms to depart from the town of Leith, and leave it free and open to the subjects of the realm. She replied that their letter appeared, from its tone, rather to come from a prince to his subjects than from subjects to a prince; that it was ridiculous to talk of foreigners making a conquest of the realm, since Frenchmen were naturalised subjects, and Scotland united to France by marriage; and she concluded by commanding the duke and his company, under pain of treason, to depart from the capital.

The Lord Lion, who brought this message from the queen, was requested to await his answer; and the whole Congregation, consisting of the nobles, barons, and burgesses of their faction, assembled in the Tolbooth of the city on the 21st of October.

At this meeting the question of the deposition of the regent was debated with much solemnity. It was urged by Lord Ruthven, who was chosen president, that since she, who was not their natural born sovereign, but only a regent, had contemptuously refused the requests of those who by birth were councillors of the realm, and since her pretences threatened to bring the commonwealth into bondage, she ought no longer to be permitted to domineer over them: he proposed, therefore, that she should be deposed; and much diversity of opinion having been expressed, they requested the advice of their preachers.

On this delicate subject much thought and discussion had already taken place. We have seen, indeed, that the deprivation of the queen, and the alteration of the civil government,

had been contemplated some time before. Willock spoke first, and having enlarged on the Divine Ordinance of Magistracy, he stated its limitations by the Word of God, and quoted the examples of the depositions of kings which occurred in the Scriptures; he then adverted to the oppression inflicted on them by the queen-regent, whom he denominated an open and obstinate idolatress. She had refused them justice, she had invaded their liberties, she had prevented the preaching of God's Word, and had not scrupled to declare that their country was no longer a free and independent realm, but an appanage of France. Such being her conduct, he could see no reason why they, the born councillors of the realm, should scruple to divest her of all authority amongst them.¹ This judgment was corroborated, though somewhat more guardedly, by Knox. He approved, he said, of the sentiments of his brother, but warned them that no malversation of the regent ought to withdraw their hearts from the obedience due to their sovereigns, and protested that they ought deeply to examine their own motives. If, he said, the present grave and momentous proceeding originated not from the desire to preserve their commonwealth, but was dictated by private malice and envy, they need not expect to escape the wrath of God; and lastly, he observed that, upon her repentance and submission to the nobility, they were undoubtedly bound to restore her to the same honours of which she was now deprived.² Such being the decision of their ministers, the votes of the assembly were individually taken: it was resolved without a dissenting voice, that the regent should be suspended from her authority, and the act for this purpose was immediately drawn up, and proclaimed publicly to the people.³ It remained only to communicate it to the regent; and for this purpose a letter was ad-

¹ Keith, pp. 104, 105.

² MS. Calderwood, vol. i. pp. 386, 387; and British Museum, Caligula, book x. fol. 42.

³ 22d October 1559.

dressed to her and delivered to the Lion herald. It informed her that they had received her message, and understood from the terms in which it was conceived her determined opposition to the glory of God, the liberty of the realm, and the welfare of the nobles; for saving of which, it continued, we have in our sovereign lord and lady's name suspended your commission, and all administration of the policy your grace may pretend thereby; being most assuredly persuaded that your proceedings are direct contrary to our sovereign lord and lady's will, whom we ever esteem to be for the weal and not for the hurt of this our commonweal. And, it proceeded, "as your grace will not acknowledge us, our sovereign lord and lady's true barons, for your subjects and council, no more will we acknowledge you for any regent or lawful magistrate unto us. Seeing, if any authority ye have, by reason of our sovereign's commission granted unto your grace, the same for most weighty reasons is worthily suspended by us, by name and authority of our sovereigns, whose council we are, of native birth, in the affairs of this our commonweal."¹

It must be admitted that this violent and unprecedented measure, although attempted to be concealed under the name and authority of the sovereign, was an act of open rebellion, and that to attempt to justify their proceedings under the allegation that they were born councillors of the realm was a specious but unsound pretence. Their birth entitled some of them to sit in parliament, but could never bestow upon them the power to constitute themselves a self-elected council, without the intervention of the royal authority or any meeting of the three estates. Having, however, thus boldly begun, it was judged right to proceed in the same strain. On the 25th a herald was sent to summon all French and Scottish soldiers to leave the town of Leith, within twelve hours. This being disregarded, preparations were

¹ Keith, p. 105.

made for the assault, and scaling ladders were ordered to be prepared in the aisles of the High Church of St Giles, much to the annoyance of the preachers, who predicted that an enterprise begun in sacrilege must end in defeat.² Nor was it long before these gloomy anticipations were fulfilled: the money given to Balnaves, and a small additional sum brought by Randolph, was now spent; the soldiers of the Congregation clamoured for pay, and breaking into mutiny, offered their services to any Catholic or Protestant master who would pay them their wages; the army, lately twelve thousand strong, but composed of inferior vassals, who could not remain long in the field, diminished daily; consternation seized the minds of their leaders; and it was evident that, without additional assistance, their great enterprise was at an end. To comfort them, Elizabeth, at the earnest entreaties of Cecil, forgot her parsimony, and intrusted four thousand pounds to Cockburn of Ormiston, a zealous adherent of the cause, who undertook the dangerous commission of carrying it to head-quarters; but he was waylaid, wounded, and robbed of the whole by the Earl of Bothwell, and the Congregation thrown into extreme distress.³ The action was the more treacherous, as Bothwell, afterwards so notorious for his crimes, was at this moment in secret correspondence with the reformers, and had professed attachment to their cause. To this succeeded another calamity: Haliburton, provost of Dundee, and reputed one of the best military leaders in the country, conducted a party of his townsmen to besiege Leith, and had planted some great ordnance on an eminence near Holyrood. During the absence of many of the leaders of the Congregation, who had gone to the sermon, which lasted till noon, the French

² Knox, p. 200. British Museum, Caligula, book x. fol. 47, dorso. The Scottish Lords to Sir Ralph Sadler, 6th November 1559.

³ Sadler's State Papers, pp. 538, 539. MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 393. MS. State-paper Office, Intelligence out of Scotland, 10th November 1559.

attacked the battery, and defeating his party with great loss, pursued them into the streets of the city, where they had the cruelty to slay not only several aged persons who could make no resistance, but to murder a woman in cold blood, with an infant at her breast.¹ On their return to Leith the queen-regent, sitting on the ramparts, welcomed her victorious soldiers, and smiled to see them loaded with the homely and multifarious plunder of the houses of her poor citizens. We cannot wonder that the popularity of this princess was on the wane, yet her affairs continued to prosper; and her enemies, divided in opinion and despairing of support, became weakened by desertion and spiritless in their exertion. On the 5th of November, the French sallied from Leith, with the purpose of intercepting a convoy carrying provisions into Edinburgh. Arran and the Lord James attacked them at the head of a small company; but pushing into difficult ground, they got entangled between the morass of Restalrig and the moat surrounding the park, and falling into confusion, were defeated with great loss. Haliburton, to whose exertions it was owing that they were not entirely cut to pieces, fell in this action; and although the Lord James and Arran escaped, its consequences were so fatal that the Congregation abandoned the town at midnight, and retired precipitately, first to Linlithgow and afterwards to Stirling.² The capital had generally been esteemed peculiarly favourable to the reformers; but the late disasters cooled the ardour of many of their proselytes, and they retreated amidst the shouts and insults of a great proportion of the citizens.³

At this season of trial and distress, the courage and eloquence of Knox wonderfully supported his party.

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 394.

² 6th November 1559.

³ MS. Calderwood, pp. 399, 400. Sadler, vol. i. p. 554. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 10th November 1559, Intelligence out of Scotland. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Sir Ralph Sadler, 11th November 1559.

Whilst yet in Edinburgh he had commenced a sermon on the 80th Psalm, in which he demonstrated that the felicity of God's people was not to be measured by external appearances, since, in the course of their history, it had often happened that his chosen flock suffered more severely than the ignorant and idolatrous heathen. At Stirling he continued the subject; warned the Congregation of their sin in trusting too much to an arm of flesh; reminded them of their humility and holiness, when, at the commencement of this great struggle, they had only God for their protector; and bade them beware lest they had more respect to the power and dignity of their leader, the duke, than to the favour of Heaven and the equity of their cause. Passing from this to a personal exhortation, he reproached Chastelherault with his slowness to join the reformers, and pointed out the sin he had committed in giving assistance to their enemies. "I am uncertain," said he, "if my lord's grace hath unfeignedly repented of his assistance given to the murderers who unjustly pursued us; I am uncertain if he hath repented of the innocent blood of Christ's martyrs, which was shed through his default. But let it be that so he hath done, (as I hear he hath confessed his offence before the Lords and brethren of the Congregation,) yet sure I am that neither he nor his friends did feel before this time the anguish and grief of heart which we felt when their blind fury pursued us; and therefore hath God justly permitted both them and us to fall in this confusion—us, because we put our confidence in man; and them, to make them feel how bitter was that cup which they had made others to drink before them. What then remaineth, said he, but that both they and we turn to the Eternal, our God, who beateth down to death, that He may raise up again, to leave behind the remembrance of His wondrous deliverance to the praise of His own name, which, if we do unfeignedly, I no more doubt that this our dolour, confusion, and fear shall be

turned into joy, honour, and boldness than I doubt that God gave victory to the Israelites over the Benjamites, after they were twice with ignominy repulsed and driven back. Be assured, he concluded, with that fervour of expression and manner which gave weight and entrance to every syllable —this cause, whatever becomes of us and our mortal carcases, shall, in despite of Satan, prevail in this realm of Scotland: it is the eternal truth of God; and, however for the time oppressed, must in the end be triumphant.”¹

Animated by this address, the leaders met in council, and after prayer by Knox it was resolved instantly to despatch Maitland of Lethington to solicit assistance from Elizabeth; at the same time, being unable to keep the field, they determined, till an answer arrived from England, to separate into two parties. The Duke, with the Earl of Glencairn, and the Lords Boyd and Ochiltree, remained at Glasgow with their friends, for the comfort and defence of the brethren; Arran, the Lord James, the Earl of Rothes, the Master of Lindsay, and their adherents, continued in Fife;² and it was resolved that on the 16th of December a convention should be held at Stirling, with the view of deciding upon more active operations.

On the retreat of the Protestants from the capital the town was immediately occupied by the queen-regent, but all her attempts to procure possession of the castle were unavailing. Its governor, Lord Erskine, declared that, as it had been committed to his charge by the parliament of Scotland,³ nothing but an order of the same great council would induce him to surrender it; and although alternately flattered and threatened by both parties, he appears honestly to have kept his resolution. Yet it was evident that the regent had gained important ground; her successes imparted confi-

dence to her soldiers; and the news having been carried to France, great preparations were made to send such a force into Scotland as should at once crush the Congregation and put an end to the war.

But Elizabeth became at length convinced that such a result would weaken the power and endanger the tranquillity of England; nor could the reformers have selected a more able envoy than Maitland of Lethington to confirm her in this idea.⁴ He represented to her, in strong terms, the impossibility of their being able to cope with the veteran troops of France, unless she supported them by an open demonstration in their favour, and sent a naval and military force to their assistance. The great difficulty lay in the circumstance that both countries were at peace, and that any active co-operation with the reformed faction would justly be considered as an open declaration of war. Some time before this⁵ Knox had suggested to Sir James Crofts, the governor of Berwick, a crafty political expedient, by which a thousand or more men might, without breach of league with France, be sent to their assistance in Scotland.⁶ It was free, he said, for English subjects to serve any nation or prince in war who paid their wages; and if this was questioned, he recommended that Elizabeth should first send the auxiliaries into Scotland, and then declare them rebels after they had embraced the service of the Congregation.⁷ Crofts either was, or affected to be, shocked by such advice at the time:⁸ but on the arrival of Maitland at the English court, his representations of the desperate condition of the affairs of the Protestants induced Elizabeth and her council to adopt a line of policy essentially the same as that recommended by the reformer. It was resolved to enter into an agreement or league with the

¹ Knox's History, p. 210.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Balnaves to Cecil, 19th Nov. 1559.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 10th December 1559. Alexander Whitelaw to Cecil.

⁴ Sadler, vol. i. p. 565.

⁵ On the 23rd October 1559.

⁶ British Museum, Caligula, book x. fol. 43. Knox, under the feigned name of John Sinclair to Crofts, 25th October 1559.

⁷ Keith, Appendix, pp. 39-41.

⁸ Sadler, vol. i. pp. 523, 524.

leaders of the Congregation, the terms of which were to be discussed in a secret meeting of commissioners from both countries, to be held at Berwick. Preparations at the same time were made for the equipment of a fleet, which was to cruise in the Firth; and orders were given to assemble an army, which might co-operate with the reduced forces of the Protestants. This grateful intelligence was brought to the reformers on the 15th of December, by Robert Melvill, who, along with Randolph, had accompanied Lethington to the English court, and enjoyed the confidence of Elizabeth.¹

It is curious to observe the extraordinary circumspection and care used by the English queen in the steps which she now took. She transmitted to the reformers exact directions regarding the manner in which they were to apply to her for relief. The instructions to Lethington, when he took his journey to the English court, were drawn up in strict conformity to a paper sent by Cecil; and special pains were taken that in the application which they made there was no mention of religion. The single ground upon which they entreated succour from England was the tyranny of France, the evident intention of that kingdom to make a conquest of Scotland, and ultimately to dispossess Elizabeth of the throne.² "Most true it is," say they, "that this practice of the French is not attempted only against this kingdom of Scotland, but also against the crown and kingdom of England and Ireland; for we know most certainly that the French have devised to spread abroad, though most falsely, that our queen is right heir to England and Ireland; and, to notify the same to the world, have, in paintings at public jousts in France and other places, this year caused the arms of England, contrary to all right, to be borne quarterly with the arms of Scotland, meaning nothing less than any augmentation to Scotland, but to

annex them both perpetually to the crown of France."³ We have here a strong presumption that Elizabeth was inimical to what she esteemed the ultra-Protestant Reformation established in Scotland; nor can it be denied that this transaction presents us with a somewhat mortifying view of the early reformers in this country, when we find that after all the solemn warnings denounced against trusting too exclusively to an arm of flesh, Knox, who then acted as secretary to the council of the congregation in the west, and Balnaves, who filled the same situation in the council established at Glasgow, consented to purchase the co-operation of mere human power, by omitting all allusion to that great cause of religious reformation which they had so repeatedly represented as the paramount object for which they had taken up arms, and were ready to sacrifice their lives.

During the interval occupied by the mission of Lethington to England, neither party was idle. The queen-dowager eagerly availed herself of the advantages she had gained. She despatched Monsieur de Rubay to remonstrate with Elizabeth against the support which she had given to her rebellious subjects:⁴ she occupied the capital, and afterwards carried the war into Fife, where she exerted herself to disperse and defeat the little band there commanded by Arran and the Lord James. These leaders, however, who had gained in military experience, were able to keep the French in check; and a seasonable supply of money, which they received early in December, communicated fresh spirits to their party, and encouraged them to levy an additional force of one thousand foot and two hundred horse.⁵ At Glasgow the duke confined

³ This sentence is, in great part, a transcript of the instructions drawn up by Elizabeth. See Sadler, p. 570.

⁴ MS. Letter, draft by Cecil, State-paper Office. Queen Elizabeth to the Queen-dowager, 28th November 1559. See also Mr Stevenson's Illustrations, p. 78. The Lord James to Sir R. Sadler and Sir J. Crofts, Nov. 17, 1559. Also, Caligula, British Museum, book x., 53 dorso.

⁵ Sadler, vol. i. pp. 631, 632.

¹ Sadler, vol. i. p. 647. Also, British Museum, Caligula, book x. fol. 57. MS. Instructions to Winter.

² Sadler, vol. i. p. 569.

his efforts to what was termed the "abolition of idolatry." His reformation, however, was one of a very active and violent description. Not only did he cause all the images, altars, and reliques within the churches to be pulled down, but he attacked and took possession of the palace of the archbishop, from which he was with difficulty expelled by the French. Soon after this,¹ a proclamation was made at Glasgow. It ran in the name of Francis and Mary, king and queen of Scots, and informed those misguided subjects who still respected the authority of the queen-dowager that her whole power had been devolved upon the Lords of the Privy-council who were reformed. Their chief aim, they declared, was to advance the glory of God, and to remove idolatry; for which end they commanded all such clergymen as had not yet made open confession of their faith to appear before the council at St Andrews, and there give full proof of their conversion by a public renunciation of all manner of superstition, under the penalty of losing their benefices and being reputed enemies to God.² Nor was this all. In the beginning of the following month, the council of the Congregation at Dundee, in the name of the king and queen, directed their denunciations against the Consistory, which they denominated the court of Antichrist, whose cursings and threatenings, they affirmed, had greatly oppressed and deluded the people. They commanded that no such assembly should afterwards be held, and interdicted such wicked persons as had dared to disobey this injunction from any repetition of their offence, under pain of death.³ It is certain, therefore, that the Congregation, although Elizabeth did not permit them to name the subject of religion, had in no respect departed from their resolution to destroy the ancient faith, and to plant what they esteemed a purer form of doctrine and worship upon its ruins.

¹ 30th Nov. 1559.

² Keith, p. 111.

³ Ibid., p. 112, (14th Dec. 1559.)

The eyes of both parties were now anxiously turned to the sea. The French were aware that the Marquess d'Elbeuf had sailed from Calais with a powerful fleet;⁴ the Protestants knew that Winter, the English admiral, was embarked for Scotland, with a squadron of fourteen ships of war. Uncertain, however, of the time they might be detained, it was not judged prudent to risk a defeat;⁵ and D'Osell, the French commander, encouraged by some trifling successes, concentrated his force at Dysart, and began his march along the coast, with the design of attacking St Andrews. At this moment some large vessels were descried bearing up the Firth; and the French soldiers, believing them to be their friends, expressed the utmost exultation. In a short time, however, these hopes were turned into dismay. The stranger ships, hoisting the English colours, proved to be Winter, who, having first seized two victuallers which lay in their course, proceeded and cast anchor in the road. Their arrival intimidated D'Osell; but making a forced and circuitous march by Stirling, in which his troops were dreadfully harassed, not only by the snow drifting in their faces, but by the attacks of the Lord James and his cavalry,⁶ he at last with difficulty regained his fortifications of Leith. Meanwhile the regent having sent on board the admiral to demand the cause of this visit in a time of peace, was answered, "that his intentions were pacific, and having gone to sea in search of pirates, he had entered the Firth to watch for them there."⁷ A remonstrance which she directed to be made to Elizabeth by the French ambassador, De Sevre, was met by a reply equally evasive. The queen solemnly assured him she respected the treaties, and thought of nothing

⁴ The exact time of the marquess's sailing for Scotland is uncertain. On the 30th Dec. Cecil writes he had not sailed. Sadler, vol. i. p. 669.

⁵ Sadler, vol. i. p. 690. Ibid., p. 697, (January 23, 1559-60.)

⁶ Ibid., vol. i. p. 699. Diurnal of Occurrences, p. 55.

⁷ British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. I. p. 407. Keith, 116. Sadler, vol. i. p. 697.

less than war; but she added, that she saw with uneasiness the increase of the French force in Scotland, and deemed it prudent to strengthen her Border garrisons, and observe the progress of their arms. De Sevre then replied, "that what chiefly gave discontent to his court was the aid which the Queen of England had given to the Scottish rebels;" to which she answered, "that she could not consider the nobility and nation of Scotland as rebels; she deemed them, on the contrary, wise and faithful subjects to the crown of Scotland, since they had ventured to offend the French king in defence of the rights of his wife, their sovereign." "And truly," added she, "if these barons should permit the government of their kingdom to be wrested out of their hands during the absence of their queen; if they tamely gave up the independence of their native country, whilst she used the counsel, not of the Scots, but solely of the French, her mother and other foreigners being her advisers in Scotland, and the cardinal and Duke of Guise in France, it were a good cause for the world to speak shame of them: nay, if the young queen herself should happen to survive her husband, she would in such a case have just occasion to condemn them all as cowards and unnatural subjects."¹

Having returned this answer, in which there was some little truth, and a large proportion of duplicity, Elizabeth proceeded to give still more decided encouragement to the Congregation. In the end of January, (1559-60,) the Duke of Norfolk arrived at Berwick, and being afterwards met by Maitland, Balnaves, Pitarrow, and Lord Ruthven, who were sent by the Congregation as commissioners,² a treaty was concluded, by which the English queen took under her protec-

tion the kingdom of Scotland, with the Duke of Chastelherault and his party. She engaged to send them assistance, and continue her support till the French should be expelled from the country, and not to abandon the confederated lords as long as they recognised Mary for their queen, and maintained inviolate the rights of the crown. On the other hand, it was agreed by the duke and his friends that they would join their forces with the army of England; they promised that no other union of their country with France than that which then existed should ever receive their sanction; they agreed to consider the enemies of England as their own, and if that country should be attacked by France, to furnish the queen with an auxiliary force of four thousand men; they promised, in the last place, that hostages should immediately be given for the performance of these articles, and protested that they would continue loyal to the Queen of Scotland and the king, her husband, in everything which did not tend to the overthrow of the ancient laws and liberties of their country.³

This treaty being concluded, and the hostages having arrived at Berwick, the English army, under the command of Lord Grey, entered Scotland on the 2d of April 1560. It consisted of two thousand horse and six thousand foot, and was joined at Preston by the army of the Congregation,⁴ led by the duke, the Earls of Argyle, Glencairn, and Menteith, the Lord James, and other principal officers amongst the reformers, and estimated at nearly eight thousand men.

On the advance of the enemy, the queen-regent, alarmed for her personal security, was received by Lord Erskine within the castle of Edinburgh; and the united armies having pushed forward from Preston to Restalrig, a sharp skirmish of cavalry

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 17th February 1559. Backed by Cecil, answer made to the French ambassador, by Sir W. Cecil and Sir — —.

² Sadler, vol. i. p. 708. Lethington did not leave London to go to Berwick till February 18. See, also, British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 411.

³ Keith, pp. 117-119. Also, British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. i. pp. 410, 414, for Instructions to the Scottish Commissioners, and Ratification of the Treaty by the Congregation.

⁴ Sadler, vol. i. p. 712. British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 416.

took place, in which the French were beat back with the loss of forty men and a hundred prisoners.¹ Having determined to besiege Leith, Lord Grey encamped on the fields to the south and south-east of that seaport; Winter, the English admiral, opened a cannonade from the fleet; whilst a battery of eight pieces of ordnance commenced firing on the land side, by which the French guns placed on St Anthony's steeple were speedily silenced and dismounted. But this advantage, which produced in the combined armies an over-confidence and contempt of discipline, was followed by a more serious action, in which Martignes attacked the English trenches, entered the camp, spiked three cannon, and put about six hundred men to the sword, after which he retreated, with little loss, to Leith.²

The Congregation were discouraged, not only by this defeat, but by the coldness and continued neutrality of some of the principal barons, who had promised to join their party. Of these, the chief was Huntly, whose power in the northern parts of the realm was almost kingly, whilst his attachment to the Catholic faith, and to his own interest, rendered him difficult to be dealt with. He had at length secretly engaged to make common cause with the reformed party, but he delayed from day to day, watching the progress of events, and calculating the probabilities of success, before he declared himself; and he took the precaution of entering into a separate treaty with the duke and the Lords, by which he stipulated for the preservation of his authority, and the security of his great possessions in the north.³ The original papers drawn up on this occasion disclose an interesting fact, not formerly stated by any

historian. The French, it appears, had gained so much influence in the northern parts of the country, that they procured a league to be made amongst the northern nobles and certain clans and islemen, by which they engaged to defend, with their whole power, the Catholic faith, and to maintain the French authority within the kingdom. Huntly asserted, and probably with some foundation, that as soon as he joined the Congregation he would be attacked as a common enemy by the members of this league; and he was answered by the reformed Lords, that as their agreement bound them to mutual defence, as soon as he joined the party he would participate in this obligation, and enjoy its benefits.⁴

On the 25th of April, Huntly entered the camp, accompanied by sixty horse; and soon after arrived the Bishop of Valence, a commissioner from the court of France, instructed to attempt a mediation between the queen-dowager and the Lords of the Congregation. As Elizabeth had requested he should be heard, the reformers, although indisposed to the negotiation, could not refuse to give him audience; but they insisted that the only basis upon which they could consent to treat should be the demolition of the fortifications of Leith, and the expulsion of the French from Scotland. These terms were rejected by the prelate, who upon his part demanded an express renunciation of the league with England. This, it was said, could not be done without the consent of Elizabeth; but they offered to produce the contract to the estates of Parliament; and if they found the league prejudicial to the liberty of Scotland, or against their allegiance as true subjects, to use every means to have it dissolved.⁵ Under such

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 6th April 1560. Randolph to Cecil. MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 416. Lesley's History, Bannatyne edition, p. 282.

² 15th April, Lesley, p. 285. Keith, p. 124.

³ MS. State-paper Office, My Lord Earl of Huntly's desires and counsel. Backed by Randolph. Also, MS. State-paper Office, The Lords' answer to the Earl of Huntly, 18th April 1560.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, My Lord Earl of Huntly's desires and counsel. Backed by Randolph. Also, MS. State-paper Office, The Lords' answer to the Earl of Huntly, 18th April 1560.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 26th April 1560. Also, MS. Letter, Ibid., Randolph to the Duke of Norfolk, 25th April 1560, from the Camp. Also, British Museum, Caligula, book x. folio 88, Memorial

circumstances, the conference having broken off, a second covenant was drawn up by the Congregation,¹ in which they obliged themselves, not only to support the reformation of religion, the freedom of preaching, and the due administration of the sacraments, according to the Word of God, but to resist the tyranny of the French, and to unite for the expulsion of strangers and the recovery of their ancient liberty.²

After many delays, Huntly at last consented to sign this agreement; and a reinforcement having arrived from England, Lord Grey determined to concentrate his whole efforts upon the siege of Leith, which began to suffer dreadfully from famine. Early in May a general assault was made, but treachery had entered the English camp. Sir James Crofts, to whom the attack upon the quarter towards the sea had been committed, failed to bring forward his division in time; the scaling ladders on being applied to the wall were found too short, and the English, after their utmost efforts, were driven back with severe loss.³ The queen-regent, availing herself of this success, expressed her deep commiseration for the afflicted state of the country, and requested an interview with the Earls of Huntly and Glencairn, with whom she was ready to enter into a negotiation. Instead, however, of these two noblemen, the Lord James, with Lethington, Lord Ruthven, and the Master of Maxwell, waited upon her; they offered to dismiss their troops, to return to their allegiance, and acknowledge her authority, under the single condition that the French soldiers should depart the realm; and if these terms were accepted, they were ready, they said, to refer all other subjects in dispute to the decision of a parliament. There seems every reason to believe that the regent, if permitted to follow her

to the Queen-dowager, by Chaperon, 11th April 1560.

¹ 27th April.

² Keith, p. 125.

³ Ibid., p. 124. See Mr Stevenson's Illustrations of the reign of Mary, p. 80. Letter of the Dowager to D'Osell.

own opinion, would have closed with these proposals; but her hands were tied by her French advisers. She requested time to consult La Brosse, D'Osell, and the Bishop of Amiens; this was refused—apparently unreasonably refused—and the conference came abruptly to an end.⁴

The anxiety of the queen-dowager for peace was dictated by her own precarious health. Her constitution, worn out by fatigue and anxiety, was now completely broken. Since her retreat within the castle of Edinburgh, she had been repeatedly attacked by severe fits of sickness, and feeling that her period of life would be brief, she laboured to compose the troubles of the kingdom. This charitable design it was not permitted her to accomplish; but finding herself reduced to such a state of weakness, that death was rapidly approaching, she requested an interview with the leaders of the Congregation.⁵ The Duke of Chastelherault, the Earls of Argyle, Marshal, and Glencairn, with the Lord James, immediately repaired to the castle, and, entering her bedchamber, were welcomed by the dying queen with a kindness and cordiality which deeply moved them. She expressed her grief for the distracted state of the nation, and advised them to send both the French and English forces out of the kingdom; she declared her unfeigned concern that matters had been pushed to such extremities; ascribed it to the perverse counsels of the French cabinet, which she found herself obliged to obey, and denounced the crafty and interested advice of Huntly, who had interrupted the conference at Preston, when she was herself ready to have agreed to their proposals. She recommended to them a faithful adherence to their league with France, which was in no degree inconsistent with, but rather necessarily arose out of the obedience they owed to their lawful sovereign and the maintenance of their national liberty. To these advices she added many endearing ex-

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 14th May 1560, Lethington to Cecil.

⁵ Ibid., 8th June 1560, Randolph to Cecil.

pressions, and with tears asked pardon of all whom she had in any way offended, declaring that she herself freely forgave the injuries she might have received, and trusted that they should all meet with the same forgiveness at the bar of God. She then, with an expression full of sweetness, though her countenance was pallid and emaciated, embraced and kissed the nobles one by one, extending her hand to those of inferior rank who stood by, as a token of dying charity. It was impossible that so much love, so gently and unaffectedly expressed, should fail to move those to whom it was addressed. The hardy barons, who had lately opposed her with the bitterest rancour, were dissolved in tears; they earnestly requested her to send for some godly and learned man, from whom she might receive, not only consolation, but instruction; and on the succeeding day she willingly admitted a visit from Willock.¹ Mild in his manner, but faithful to his belief, the minister spoke to the dying princess of the efficacy of the death of Christ, and the abomination of the mass as a relic of idolatry. To the first point, she assured him that she looked for salvation in no other way than in and through the death of her Saviour; to the second, she quietly declined to give an answer, and on the succeeding day expired, full of faith and hope.²

Had she been permitted to follow her own excellent understanding, there

¹ Keith, p.128. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 8th June 1560. Randolph to Cecil.

² Ibid. She died on the 10th of June 1560.

seems little doubt that the queen-regent would have succeeded in composing the differences which so grievously distracted the kingdom, and threw so deep a gloom over the concluding years of her government. Possessed, according to the testimony of writers whose opposite principles render their evidence unsuspected, of a sound and clear intellect, a kind heart, and a generous and forgiving temper, she had gained the affections of the people, and the confidence of the nobility, by the wisdom, liberality, and prudence with which she conducted the affairs of the country during the first years of her regency. These were eminently popular and successful, nor did the tide turn against her, till, surrounded by the perils and difficulties of the Reformation, she was compelled to adopt the violent principles of the house of Guise, and to forsake the system of conciliation which she at first adopted. It is sad to find that intolerance and persecution pursued her even after death. "Question," says Calderwood, "being moved afterwards about her burial, the preachers boldly gainststood to the use of any superstitious rites in that realm which God of his mercy had begun to purge. Her burial was deferred till further advisement; her corpse was lapped in a coffin of lead, and kept in the castle from the 10th of June till the 19th of October, at which time it was carried by some pioneers to a ship,"³ and transported to France.

³ British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 421.

4 months & 10 days
Her body kept in
Edinburgh castle

CHAPTER V.

MARY.

1560—1561.

PREVIOUS to the death of the queen-regent all parties had become averse to the continuance of the war. From the first Elizabeth had expressed to her ministers her earnest wish to remain at peace, if it could be accomplished with security and honour; and although she at length consented to send an army into Scotland, during its march, and even after the opening of hostilities, her negotiations for an amicable settlement with France were earnest and uninterrupted: nor were the ministers of that kingdom less anxious to bring matters to an adjustment. They were convinced that the sagacity and penetration of Cecil and Throckmorton had fully detected their ambitious designs upon England; they agreed that the vast and impracticable project of the house of Guise for the destruction of the reformed religion, and the union of the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and France under one head, must be for the present abandoned. The extraordinary expense of the Scottish war could no longer be borne; and in the present state of France, itself torn by religious persecution, and weakened by frequent conspiracies and popular commotions, peace appeared the only remedy for the country. Nor were the Lords of the Congregation prepared to prolong the struggle: experience had shewn them that, even with the assistance of England, France was a more formidable enemy than they had imagined. The fortifications of Leith were so strong, that Lethington acknowledged in one of his letters it might defy, if well victualled, an army of twenty thousand men.¹

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Norfolk, 9th April 1560.

It was impossible for them to keep the great body of their forces, composed of the feudal militia, for any long time under arms; and without money, which was exceedingly scarce amongst them, their hired soldiers were ready to mutiny and sell themselves to the enemy. They were as willing, therefore, to negotiate as the other belligerents; and under these circumstances, after some time spent in correspondence and preliminary arrangements, Cecil, the able minister of Elizabeth, and Sir Nicholas Wotton, repaired to Edinburgh in the middle of June. Here they met the French commissioners, the Bishops of Valence and Amiens, La Brosse, D'Osell, and the Sieur de Randan, who being the bearer of a letter from his master the French king to Elizabeth, had in his passage through England been admitted to an interview with that princess.²

The treaty which was now about to be concluded embraced two great objects. It was necessary to settle, first, the differences between France and England; and, secondly, to secure the interests of the Lords of the Congregation. They had taken up arms against their natural sovereign for the expulsion of the French troops from their country, and to restore, as they alleged, the kingdom to its ancient liberty. With this end in view, they had entered into a separate treaty with Elizabeth, who had afforded them assistance both in money and by the presence of an army. It was necessary, therefore, to protect them from

² Forbes, vol. i. p. 432. State-paper Office, MS. Letter, Cecil to Elizabeth, Edinburgh 19th June 1560.

the probable vengeance of their own sovereign; and this could only be done by including, in the agreement between England and France, a recognition of the treaty between Elizabeth and the reformed Lords. The complaint that the arms and title of the monarchs of England had been unjustly assumed by the King and Queen of France was easily adjusted. The French commissioners, with little difficulty, agreed to renounce it, and even to consider the claim of compensation made by Elizabeth for the injury which she had sustained. But serious debates arose upon the second point. The negotiations here included that large portion of the nobles and commons of Scotland which had embraced the Reformation. They had taken arms in the beginning of the war to protect themselves from persecution, and to secure liberty of conscience: as it proceeded they had boldly announced their determination to overthrow the established religion; they had carried this resolution into effect by an attack upon the religious houses, whose revenues had been seized; they had placed their lands in the hands of agents or factors, and the ecclesiastical proprietors had been reduced to poverty. Nor was this all: this same party had suspended the queen-regent from the exercise of her authority, and had assumed the supreme power, not only without any commission from their sovereign, but contrary to her express injunctions. It was not without reason, therefore, that they were regarded in France as guilty of rebellion; and with justice it was pleaded by the French commissioners that the treaty of Berwick, between the Queen of England and the Lords of the Congregation, could never be recognised as binding by their sovereign, without compromising her dignity in the most serious manner.

But if the French lords were thus anxious to dissolve this obnoxious league, Cecil, who saw its advantages, was as resolute that it should be maintained. He declared it to be the fixed intention of his mistress that the

treaty of Berwick should be not only recognised but confirmed. The commissioners of Mary and Francis remonstrated. "They had received no authority," they said, "on this point; it was even part of their instructions that any allusion to it should be carefully avoided." The superior diplomatic craft of Cecil was successfully exerted to meet the difficulty. He affected to be indignant and inflexible. "All conference," he said, "must be broken off. The Duke of Norfolk should receive orders to advance with his army into Scotland, and the matter must once more be committed to the arbitrement of the sword." Nay, so vigorously did he exert himself, that, on some question raised by the French regarding Elizabeth's right to the kingdoms of England and Ireland, the minister threw his defiance in the teeth of the French commissioners, and offered in that quarrel to spend his blood upon any of them that would deny it.¹ How this bravado was received does not appear; but in the end the dexterity of Cecil was triumphant. By his directions, an article was framed which flattered the vanity of the French, and preserved the dignity of their sovereign, whilst it secured the real interests of the Congregation without including any formal declaration that the concessions made to them by France proceeded from the alliance they had made with England. The sentence of the letter in which the minister communicates this result to his royal mistress is characteristic. "To make a cover for all this, those ambassadors were forced by us to take a few good words in a preface to the same article, and we, content with the kernel, yielded to them the shell to play withal."²

The treaty now concluded was in every way advantageous to the English queen. The claims of France, and the pretensions of this power, had been a source of great annoyance to her from the commencement of her reign; they were now finally renounced. It was

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Cecil and Wotton to Elizabeth, 2d July 1560.

² Hayne's State Papers, vol. i. pp. 352, 353.

agreed that the French army should leave Scotland; all anxiety regarding an attack upon her kingdom through this country was removed; and her influence over the Lords of the Congregation was confirmed by the gratitude they felt for the assistance she had given them, as well as by the anxiety she had manifested in the negotiations to protect their interests and interpose her power between them and their offended sovereign. In a letter to his mistress, Cecil justly observes, "that the treaty would be no small augmentation to her honour in this beginning of her reign, that it would finally procure that conquest of Scotland which none of her progenitors with all their battles ever obtained—namely, the whole hearts and good-wills of the nobility and people, which surely was better for England than the revenue of the crown."¹

That portion of the treaty which embraced the affairs of the Congregation is particularly worthy of notice, as it led to the full establishment of the Reformation, and is intimately connected with the subsequent course of events. It provided that an act of oblivion should be passed for all wrongs or injuries committed, from the 6th of March 1558 to the 1st of August 1560; and that a general peace and reconciliation of all differences should take place amongst the nobility and subjects of the land, including the members of the Congregation and those who still adhered to the ancient faith. The Duke of Chastelherault, and other Scottish nobles or barons, who possessed lands in France were to be restored to their possessions; redress was to be given by parliament to the bishops and other churchmen who had received injury, and no man was to molest them in the collection of their revenues. For the better government of the realm, a council of twelve was to be constituted, of which the queen was to appoint

¹ Original Draft, State-paper Office, Cecil and Wotton to the Queen, 8th July 1560. Also, British Museum, Titus, book ii. fol. 451. MS. Letter, Lord Clinton to the Earl of Sussex—"This peace is greatly to the Queen's honour and of these realms."

seven and the estates five. It was to be their duty to take cognizance of everything during the absence of their sovereign the Queen of France. No fewer than six were to assemble on any occasion; and, the whole, or at least a majority, were to meet upon all matters of moment. Peace and war were never to be declared without the concurrence of the estates. It was anxiously provided, that in all time coming the realm should be governed by its native subjects, no foreign troops were to be brought within the kingdom; no strangers to administer justice; none but Scotsmen to be placed in the high offices of chancellor, treasurer, or comptroller; and all ecclesiastics, although Scotsmen, were excluded from these two last dignities. The nobility were interdicted from assembling soldiers or making any warlike convocations, except in such cases as were sanctioned by established usage; and it was determined that the army of England should return home immediately after the embarkation of the French troops.² It was lastly agreed that a parliament should be held in the succeeding month of August, for which a commission was to be sent by the King and Queen of France; and it was added that this meeting of the estates should in all respects be as lawful as if the same had been convoked by command of those royal persons, provided only that all who ought to be present resorted without fear to the parliament, and that its proceedings were free and unfettered.³

The conclusion of this treaty by the French commissioners, La Rochefoucault, lord of Randan, and the Bishop of Valence, was a great triumph to Elizabeth and the Congregation. The French cabinet had instructed their commissioners to beware of alluding, in the most distant manner, to the

² Spottiswood; p. 147. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 926. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 26th June 1560, Cecil to _____. Also, British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. i. pp. 422, 427.

³ Forbes, vol. i. p. 432, State-paper Office, MS. Letter, Cecil to Elizabeth, Edinburgh, 19th June 1560.

treaty of Berwick, which had been entered into between the reformers and England ; and if they could not procure the consent of the queen to the dissolution of this league, to be on their guard, at least, that no clause should be introduced which should have the effect of including the leaders of the Protestants within the protection of the treaty. Baffled, however, in their diplomacy by the superior tactics of Cecil, (whose cold, equable temper seems to have been seized with a fit of unusual exultation in alluding to the result,) Randan and Monluc, contrary to their instructions, agreed to the insertion of a sentence which virtually protected the reformers, and preserved their treaty with Elizabeth. Nay, so wary had been the conduct of Wotton and Cecil, that, to use their own words, " even if the said treaty shall not remain in force, the special points tending to keep Frenchmen out of Scotland be well and assuredly provided for."¹ The reformed Lords were not tardy to acknowledge the great obligations conferred upon them by the issue to which Elizabeth had brought the negotiations. They addressed a letter to the queen, containing the warmest expressions of gratitude, and acknowledged that, in providing for the security and liberty of Scotland, the realm was more bidden to her majesty than to their own sovereign.² Nor was this excess of gratitude at all unnatural. By the various provisions above detailed, it is evident that the Protestants had amply secured their own interests. One only objection existed to this part of the treaty, but it was a fatal one; the commissioners of Mary and Francis had no authority from their sovereign to enter into any negotiation with the Congregation, and the Queen of Scotland refused to be bound by an agreement to which she was no party.

It is remarkable that the treaty included no express provision on the subject of the reformed religion, whilst the bishops and ministers of the an-

cient faith were treated with uncommon lenity ; their property restored, their persons protected, their right of sitting in parliament acknowledged. The cause of all this is not difficult to discover : the assistance given by Elizabeth had no reference to religion ; she had agreed to support the Protestants with her army, on the sole ground that they had taken arms to preserve the liberty of their country, and to expel the French, who, through Scotland, threatened her own dominions, and questioned her title to the throne. Individually, the queen was not disposed to favour the religious views of the Congregation, whose ultra-Protestantism she regarded with aversion. Cecil, therefore, was instructed not to meddle with the subject ; and the point was left open, to be afterwards settled between the reformers and their own sovereign. Yet, in gaining the power to assemble a parliament, for which their queen was to send over a commission, and whose proceedings were to be esteemed as valid as if called by her own writ, they obtained their utmost wishes. The great body of the people, the cities, burghs, and middle classes, were, they knew, favourable to the Reformation ; and they reckoned with confidence on a majority amongst the nobles, many of whom had already tasted the sweets of ecclesiastical plunder, and were little disposed to give up what they had won. For these reasons, although certain articles concerning religion were presented to the commissioners on the part of the nobles and people of Scotland, their refusal to enter into discussion upon them does not appear to have occasioned either fear or disappointment. They looked to the convention of estates, which was so soon to meet, and felt confident that all would be there settled to their satisfaction.³

The treaty having been concluded and signed by the commissioners, peace was proclaimed at Edinburgh on the 8th July 1560. Soon after, the French army, consisting of four thousand men, were embarked in English ships for

¹ Haynes, vol. i. p. 352.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 17th July 1560. Haynes, vol. i. pp. 349, 351.

³ Keith, p. 142, article 17.

France; the English forces at the same time began their march home-ward; and on reaching Eyemouth demolished the fortifications according to the agreement.¹ A solemn public thanksgiving was held by the reformed nobles and the greatest part of the Congregation in St Giles's church, where the preacher, who was probably Knox, in a prayer preserved in his history, described the miseries of their country, lately groaning under the oppression of a foreign yoke and a worship which he pronounced abominable and idolatrous. He acknowledged the mercy of God in sending, through the instrumentality of England, a deliverance which their own policy or strength could never have accomplished; called upon them all to maintain that godly league entered into with Elizabeth, and implored God to confound the counsels of those who endeavoured to dissolve it.² Ministers were then appointed to some of the chief towns in the kingdom, Knox being directed to continue his charge at Edinburgh, whilst Goodman was sent to St Andrews, Heriot to Aberdeen, Row to Perth, and others to Jedburgh, Dundee, Dunfermline, and Leith. Superintendents were next chosen for the districts of Lothian, Glasgow, Fife, Angus and Mearns, and lastly for Argyle and the Isles.³

On the 10th of July the parliament assembled, to adjourn, as had been determined, to the 1st of August, on which day the proceedings were opened with great solemnity. So grave and important a meeting of this great council of the nation had not taken place for many years; and the attendance of all ranks was, we know from Lethington, more numerous than had ever been seen in his time.⁴ One cause of this crowded attendance was a proceeding adopted by the lesser barons. Many of these persons, notwithstanding their right to sit and vote in the assembly of the three

estates, had ceased to claim their privilege. Indifference to public affairs, occupation upon their own demesnes, and the expense of a journey to the capital, had occasioned their absence. But it was amongst these persons that the reformed doctrines had made the greatest progress; and, aware that the subjects to be debated must involve the great religious principles in dispute between the Congregation and the Catholics, they attended in their places and presented a petition, in which they prayed to be restored to their privilege, and to be allowed to give their counsel and vote in parliament. After some trifling opposition, they were permitted to take their seats, although a final decision on their claims does not appear to have been given. The accession, however, of so many votes, (their number being a hundred,) was of no small consequence to the Protestants, who were anxious that they should immediately proceed to the business of the parliament. On this, however, there arose a serious difference of opinion. It was pleaded by many that no parliament could be held till the commission arrived from their sovereign, or, at least, till some reply was received to the message which had been sent to France, informing her of their proceedings.⁵ Others alleged that, by one of the articles of the peace, it had been determined that a meeting of the three estates should be held in August, which should be as lawful as if it were summoned by express command of their queen; and the question having been put to the vote, it was decided that the parliament should continue its sittings.⁶ A week, however, was spent in the

¹ It does not appear who were despatched on this mission to inform their sovereign. As late as the 9th of August 1560, the French king expressed to Throckmorton, the English ambassador, his surprise that he had heard nothing from his commissioners, and affirmed that he had not yet seen the treaty of Edinburgh. The Bishop of Glasgow and the Lord Seton had arrived at Paris on the 3d of August. — MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Sir N. Throckmorton, 9th August 1560.

² Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. xv. pp. 493, 601.

³ Knox, pp. 251, 252. British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 428.

⁴ Keith, p. 145.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Lethington to Cecil, 15th Aug. 1560.

⁶ Spottiswood, p. 149

debate. Many, on learning the result, departed from the capital, and of the spiritual estate very few attended.

These preliminary questions having been settled, the crown, the mace, and the sword were laid upon the seat or throne usually occupied by the queen;¹ and Maitland, who possessed great influence with the Congregation, being chosen speaker, (the term then used was "harangue-maker,") opened the proceedings in an oration, of which Randolph has given us the principal heads. He excused his insufficiency to occupy that place; made a brief discourse of things past; shewed what necessity men were forced into for defence of their country; what remedy and support it had pleased God to send them; and how much they were bound heartily to acknowledge and requite it. He took away the persuasion which had then entered into many men's minds, that other things were intended than those which had been attempted; he advised all estates to renounce their individual feelings, and to bend themselves wholly to the true service of God and their country, describing the miserable condition to which it had been long reduced for lack of good government and exercise of justice. He exhorted them to mutual amity and hearty friendship—one to live with another as members all of one body, using the example of the fable, "when the mouth, having quarrelled with the members, refused to receive sustenance for so long a time that the whole body perished." In conclusion, he prayed God long to maintain amity and peace with all princes, and especially betwixt the realms of England and Scotland, in the love and fear of God.² The Clerk-register now rose, and having inquired of the three estates to what matter they would proceed, it was judged proper that the articles of the peace should be read over, which having been done, they received the unanimous appro-

bation of the assembly, and were directed to be sent over to France for the ratification of their sovereign. The Lords of the Articles were next chosen, the order of which, says Randolph, "is, that the Lords Spiritual choose the Temporal, and the Temporal the Spiritual—the Burgesses their own." Great complaint was here made by the prelates, that in the selection of the Lords Spiritual none were chosen but such as were known to be well affected to the new religion, nor was it unnoticed that some upon whom the choice had fallen were mere laymen. So great was the majority, however, of the friends of the Congregation, that it was impossible to have redress. "This being done," says Randolph, in an interesting letter to Cecil, where he describes the proceedings of the parliament, "the Lords departed, and accompanied the Duke of Chastelherault as far as the Bow, which is the gate going out of the High Street, and many down unto the palace where he lieth; the town all in armour, the trumpets sounding, and all other kinds of music, such as they have. Other solemnities have not been used, saving in times long past the Lords have had parliament robes, which are now with them wholly out of use; the Lords of the Articles sat from henceforth in Holyrood House, except that at such times as, upon any matter of importance, the whole Lords assembled themselves again, as they did this day, in the Parliament House."⁴

Having proceeded thus far, a petition was presented to the parliament by some of the most zealous of the reformers. It prayed that the doctrines professed by the Roman Catholic Church, and tyrannically maintained by the clergy, should be condemned and abolished; and amongst the errors it particularly enumerated transubstantiation, the adoration of Christ's body under the form of bread, the merit of good works, purgatory, pilgrimages, and prayers to departed saints. It declared that God of His great mercy, by the light of His Word,

¹ Keith, p. 149, erroneously states that the royal ensigns of the kingdom were omitted to be carried into the parliament.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Randolph to Cecil, 9th and 10th Aug. 1560.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Randolph to Cecil, 9th and 10th Aug. 1560.

⁴ Ibid.

had demonstrated to no small number within the realm the pestiferous errors of the Romish Church—errors which the ministers of that Church had maintained by fire and sword, and which brought damnation upon the souls that embraced them. It stated in strong and coarse language that the sacraments of our Lord were shamefully abused by that Roman harlot by whom the true discipline of the Church was extinguished; and proceeded to give an appalling picture of the corrupt lives of those who called themselves the clergy. Embracing the whole Papal Church in one sweeping anathema, the petitioners offered to prove that “in all the rabble of the clergy” there was not one lawful minister, if the Word of God and the practices of the apostles and primitive Church were to be taken as authority upon this point; it denominated them thieves and murderers, rebels, traitors, and adulterers; living in all manner of abominations, and unworthy to be suffered in any reformed commonwealth. Lastly, using that blessed name which ought to be the bond of love and charity as an incitement to railing and persecution, it called upon the parliament, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, to employ the victory which they had obtained with wholesome vigour; to compel the body of the Romish clergy to answer these accusations now brought against them; to pronounce them unworthy of authority in the Church of God, and expel them for ever from having a voice or vote in the great council of the nation; which, it continued, if ye do not, we forewarn you, in the fear of God, and by assurance of His Word, that as ye leave a grievous yoke and a burden intolerable upon the Church of God within this realm, so shall they be thorns in your eyes, and pricks in your sides, whom afterwards, when ye would, ye shall have no power to remove. In conclusion, it virtually declared that this extraordinary petition was not theirs but God's, who craved this by His servants; and it prayed Him to give them an upright heart and a right under-

standing of the request made through them.¹

The names of those who signed this violent production, which it is difficult to read without emotions of sorrow and pity, do not appear. Knox, whose fiery zeal flamed high at this period, seized the sitting of the parliament as a proper season for a course of sermons on the prophecies of Haggai, in which he tells us he was peculiarly “special and vehement,” the doctrine being proper to the times.² Many of the nobles, however, who had prospered upon the plunder of the Church demurred to the sentiments of the preacher, when he exhorted them to restore their lands for the support of the ministers; and Lethington exclaimed in mockery, “We must now forget ourselves, and bear the barrow to build the house of God.”³ Yet, although some were thus foolish, others of the barons and burgesses assembled, and we are informed by Knox that the petition emanated from them. There can be no doubt that it received the sanction, if it was not the composition of the reformer.

On being read in parliament this petition occasioned a great diversity of sentiment: to the sincere Catholic it justly appeared an impious denunciation of all that he esteemed sacred, and even the more moderate of those who had embraced the tenets of the Reformation might well doubt whether it was not calculated to inflame rather than to heal the wounds it proposed to cure; still there can be little doubt that, as the majority in the parliament supported the changes proposed, it would have been favourably received but for one circumstance, which touched some of the highest and most influential of the Protestant leaders. It called upon them to restore the patrimony of the Church, of which they had unjustly possessed themselves, to the uses for which it was originally destined—the support

¹ British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 430. Knox, p. 252.

² Knox, p. 254.

³ Ibid. The name is not given in the printed Knox.

of the ministers, the restoration of godly learning, and the assistance of the poor. This, according to Knox, was unpalatable doctrine to the nobles, who for worldly respects abhorred a perfect reformation.¹ Waving, therefore, the practical part of the question, and retaining for the present the wealth they had won, the majority of the parliament commanded the ministers to draw up a confession of their faith, or a brief summary of those doctrines which they conceived wholesome, true, and necessary to be believed,² and received within the realm. This solemn and arduous task was achieved apparently with extraordinary rapidity; but although only four days were employed in its preparation, it is evident that the Confession of Faith embodied the results of much previous study and consultation. It is a clear summary of Christian doctrine, grounded on the Word of God. On most essential points it approximates indefinitely near, and in many instances uses the very words of the Apostles' Creed, and the Articles of the Church of England as established by Edward the Sixth. Thus, in the section on baptism, the Scottish Confession of Faith declares, "We assuredly believe that by baptism we are ingrafted into Jesus Christ, to be made partakers of His justice, by the which our sins are covered and remitted." Compare this with the article of Edward the Sixth and of Elizabeth "Of Baptism." It is there said to be a sign, not only of profession, but of regeneration, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly "*are grafted into the Church.*" Again, of the Lord's Supper the Scottish Confession of Faith declares, "We most assuredly believe that the bread that we break is the communion of Christ's body, and the cup which we bless is the communion of His blood; so that we do confess and believe that the faithful in the right use of the Lord's table so do eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus that He remaineth in them and they in Him." In the Articles of Edward the

Sixth the same precise words are used. Indeed, it is worthy of remark, that in these holy mysteries of our faith this Confession, drawn up by the primitive Scottish reformers, keeps in some points at a greater distance from the rationalising of ultra-Protestantism than the Articles of Edward. But to return, before the authors of the Confession agreed finally on every point it should embrace, the treatise was submitted to the revisal of the Secretary Lethington and the sub-Prior of St Andrews, who mitigated the austerity of many words and sentences, and expunged a chapter on the limits of the obedience due by subjects to their magistrates, which they considered improper to be then discussed. So at least, says Randolph, but it is certain that a chapter "Of the Civil Magistrate" forms a portion of the Confession of Faith as it is printed by Knox,³ and that it not only prescribes in strong terms the obedience due by subjects to princes, governors, and magistrates, as powers ordained by God, but pronounces all who attempt to abolish the "Holy State of Civil Policies" as enemies alike to God and man.

When thus finished, this important paper was laid before parliament; but all disputation upon its doctrines appears to have been waved by a mutual understanding that on the one side it was unnecessary, and on the other it would be unavailing. The Roman Catholics knew that against them was arrayed a violent and overwhelming majority. So keen were the feelings of some of their leaders, that the Duke of Chastelherault had threatened his brother, the Archbishop of St Andrews, with death, if he dared to exert himself against it;⁴ nor is it by any means improbable that similar arguments had been used with other dignitaries. Of the temporal peers present, the Earls of Cassillis and Caithness alone dissented; of the spiritual, the primate, with the Bishops

¹ Knox's Hist., p. 270. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 7th September 1560, Randolph to Cecil.

² Spottiswood, p. 150.

of Dunkeld and Dunblane. Time, they said, had not been given them to examine the book : they were ready to give their consent to all things which were sanctioned by the Word of God, and to abolish the abuses which had crept into the Church, but they requested some delay, that the debate upon a question which branched into so many intricate, profound, and important subjects might be carried on with due study and deliberation.¹ To these sensible and moderate representations no attention appears to have been paid; the treatise was laid upon the table, the bishops were called upon to oppugn it upon the instant, and having declined the contest, the consent of the parliament was given almost by acclamation ; some of the Lords, in the enthusiasm of the moment, declared they would sooner end their lives than think contrary to these doctrines ; many offered to shed their blood in the cause. The Earl Marshal, with indignant sarcasm, called upon the bishops, as the pillars of the papal Church, to defend the tenets of their master ; and the venerable Lord Lindsay, rising up in his place, and alluding to his extreme age, declared that since God had spared him to see that day, and the accomplishment of so worthy a work, he was ready with Simeon to say, " *Nunc dimittis.*"²

This Confession having been sanctioned by parliament, as the standard of the Protestant faith in Scotland, it was thought proper to complete the work by passing three acts. The first abolished for ever in that country the power and jurisdiction of the pope, the second repealed all former statutes passed in favour of the Roman Catholic Church ; the third ordained that all who said mass, or who dared to hear mass, should, for the first trans-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 18th August 1560, Lethington to Cecil. In the letter of Randolph to Cecil, quoted below, (Note 2,) he says, " Of the Temporal Lords, the Earl of Cassillis, and the Earl of Caithness, said, ' Nae ; ' the rest of the Lords with common consent allowed the same." Yet Knox and Spottiswood mention Athole, Borthwick, and Somerville as dissentient.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 19th August 1560.

gression, be punished with confiscation of goods ; for the second, incur the penalty of banishment from the kingdom ; and if guilty of a third offence, be put to death. Few blessings have been of slower growth in Europe than religious toleration. The same men who had groaned so lately under persecution, who upbraided their brethren, and with perfect justice, for the tyranny of maintaining their errors by fire and sword, now injured the cause they advocated by similar severities, and compelled the reception of what they pronounced the truth, under the penalty of death.

In these transactions, Randolph, who was now resident in Edinburgh, in the character of Elizabeth's envoy at the Scottish court, took a prominent part. The spirit in which he carried on his intrigues will be understood from a passage in one of his letters relating to a subject about to be brought before the parliament—the signing the contract made between Elizabeth and the Congregation at Berwick. " The Bishop of Dunblane," says he, " is also now come ; it is not to reason upon religion, but to do, as I hear, whatsoever the Earl of Argyle will command him. If God have prepared him and his metropolitan to die obstinate Papists, yet I would wish that before they go to the devil they would shew some token that once in their lives they loved their country, and set their hands to the contract, as hardly I believe they will."³ These uncharitable and intolerant feelings, however, were not cherished against the Roman prelates alone. It was the opinion of many of the leaders of the Reformation now in progress in Scotland that the hierarchy of England, as established under Elizabeth, was nearly as corrupt as Rome itself. In a letter addressed by Goodman, originally a minister of the English Church, but now one of the most active preachers of the Congregation, to Cecil, he exhorted that powerful statesman to " abolish all the relics of

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to —, (Cecil, I think,) but the name does not appear. 15th August, 1560.

superstition and idolatry which, to the grief and scandal of the godly, were still retained in England, and (alluding probably to Bonner and Gardiner) not to suffer the bloody bishops and known murderers of God's people and your dear brethren to live, upon whom God hath expressly pronounced the sentence of death, for the execution of which He hath committed the sword into your hands, who are now placed in authority." It was this delay, he declared, this leniency in Cecil, (who was happily not animated by the same fiery spirit of persecution which guided the proceedings of Goodman,) that sticketh most in the hearts of many.¹

The Confession of Faith having been passed in parliament, the clergy next proceeded to compose a Book of Discipline, for the future government of the Church. Into the contents of this celebrated form of Church polity it is, of course, impossible to enter at any length; but it is important to remark, that it committed the election of ministers to the people, using the precaution that the person so chosen, before he was admitted to the holy office, should be examined by the ministers and elders openly upon all points, then in controversy between the Church of Rome and the Congregation, and generally upon the whole extent of sound Christian doctrine. Such having been done, the person elected and approved of was to be considered an ordained minister, and to be publicly introduced by his brethren to his congregation in the church to which he was appointed, it being expressly declared, "that any other ceremonies than the approbation of the people, and the declaration of the chief minister that the person presented is appointed to serve," are not approved of by the Congregation; "for albeit," they add, "the apostles used the imposition of hands, yet, seeing the miracle is ceased, the using the ceremony we judge not to be necessary." The same form appointed "readers" to such churches as, owing to the rarity of learned and godly men,

could not immediately be provided with ministers. It was their office simply to read the Common Prayers and the Scriptures, not to administer the sacraments. Lastly, the country was divided into ten dioceses, and over them were appointed ten ministers, who were named superintendents. These were not to be "suffered to live idle, as the bishops had done heretofore," neither were they to be stationary, but to be ambulatory preachers, continuing about three or four months in one place, after which they were to enter into a visitation of their whole bounds, preaching thrice a-week at the least, and not intermitting their labours until the churches were wholly planted. They were directed to inquire into the life and behaviour of the ministers, the manners of the people, the provision for the poor, and the instruction of the youth; and under this last head may be noticed, as first appearing in this Book of Discipline, that wise and admirable institution of parish schools, to which Scotland has owed so much of her prosperity. "It was necessary," such are nearly the words of the Congregation, "that care should be had of the virtuous and godly education of the youth, wherefore it was judged in every parish to have a proper schoolmaster, able to teach at least the Grammar and Latin tongue, where the town was of any reputation.") But it adds, "in landward, (that is country parishes,) where the people convened to doctrine only once in the week, there must either the reader or the minister take care of the youth of the parish, to instruct them in their rudiments, and especially in the Catechism of Geneva."²

This Book of Discipline was almost as bitterly opposed as the Confession had been warmly and unanimously supported. Some of the nobles and barons positively refused to subscribe it; others signed it, but eluded its injunctions; others, who dreaded the punishment of their vices or the curtailing of their revenues, mocked at its provisions and pronounced them devout imaginations. "The cause," says

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Goodman to Cecil, 26th October, 1559.

² Spottiswood, v. 154-160, inclusive.

Knox, "we have before declared. Some were licentious, some had greedily gripped¹ the possessions of the Church, and others thought that they would not lack their part of Christ's coat. . . . The chief great man," he continues, "that professed Christ and refused to subscribe the Book of Discipline was the Lord Erskine. And no wonder; for besides that he had a very evil woman to his wife, if the poor, the schools, and the ministry of the Church had their own, his kitchen would lack two parts and more of that which he now unjustly possessest. Assuredly some of us have wondered how men that profess godliness could of so long continuance hear the threatenings of God against thieves and against their houses, and knowing themselves guilty in such things as were openly rebuked, that they never had remorse of conscience, neither yet intended to restore anything of that which long they had stolen and reft. There were none within the realm more unmerciful to the poor ministers than those which had the greatest rents of the churches."²

But if severe to the Presbyterian clergy, the parliament was still more decisive against the Catholic prelates. Of these, many who had considered the meeting illegal absented themselves; others took their seats, and having protested against the injustice of excluding them from being chosen Lords of the Articles, declined all interference with the proceedings. A bill of complaint was then presented by the barons against them, "containing," says Randolph, "rather a general accusation of all living bishops than any special crime that they were burdened with." To this apparently no answer was returned: the Bishops of Dunblane, St Andrews, and Dunkeld were specially called upon to pursue their complaint; and, as they neglected to appear, a decree was passed for the "stay of their livings."³

¹ Seized.

² Knox, p. 276.

³ Original Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 27th August 1560. Keith, p. 151.

But this was not all. The Catholic prelates, in their anxiety to preserve their estates from the grasp of the barons of the Congregation, had adopted the expedient of granting conveyances, or leases of their lands, to those who agreed to pay them the rents, and to reconvey them to their original proprietors in more prosperous times. Against these alleged alienations of the estates of the Church, which had been sanctioned by the Pope, the parliament directed its censure, ordaining that all such leases should be void without further process of law.⁴

One of the last subjects which occupied the attention of the parliament was the selection of the twenty-four members, out of which number the Council of Twelve was to be chosen. It was scarcely to be expected that the choice should be impartial. Yet, although care was taken to include all the principal leaders of the Congregation, it embraced some of the opposite party. It consisted of the Duke, the Earl of Arran, the Earls of Huntly, Argyle, Glencairn, Morton, Athole, Menteith, Marshal, and Rothes; the Lords James, Erskine, Ruthven, Lindsay, Boyd, Ogilvy, St John, and the Master of Maxwell; the Lairds of Lundy, Pitarrow, Dun, Cunninghamhead, Drumlanrig, and young Lethington;⁵ and it was appointed that, until the commission from the king and queen's majesty had been sent from France, and the part which they had chosen was openly declared, six of the former council should sit continually in Edinburgh, for the administration of justice. If, however, any measure of importance involving the general interests of the kingdom was brought before them, no fewer than sixteen of the above number were bound to attend. The treaty of Berwick, which had been entered into between Elizabeth and the Lords of the Congregation, was next confirmed,⁶

⁴ Keith, pp. 151, 152.

⁵ Keith, from a work entitled "Memoirs of Scotland," vol. i. fol. 168, preserved in the Scottish College at Paris, now unfortunately lost amongst the MSS. of that ancient house.

⁶ The Lord James, for himself and the contractors, protested that they might have

and it was proposed that, as the surest basis of a perpetual amity between the two realms, an overture for a marriage between the Earl of Arran, eldest son to the Duke of Chastelherault, heir-apparent to the throne, and Queen Elizabeth should be sent to England. It was earnestly recommended by Lethington, that, until they understood in what manner Cecil was affected towards this measure, no hasty proceedings should take place; but although much disunion existed on other subjects, a singular unanimity appears to have here pervaded the assembly; and it was resolved, "that suit should be made to the Queen of England, in the best manner, that it may please her majesty, for the establishing of a perpetual friendship, to join in marriage with the Earl of Arran."¹ It was, last of all, determined that Sir James Sandilands of Calder, grand-prior of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem within Scotland, should carry an account of their proceedings to France; whilst Lethington, with the Earls of Morton and Glencairn, should be sent on the same errand to Elizabeth. Having brought these important matters to a conclusion, the parliament was dissolved on the 27th of August.²

On his arrival at the French court, Sir James Sandilands³ was received with the utmost coldness. Nor could the Congregation have expected it to be otherwise. He brought intelligence to the Queen of Scotland that, without waiting for her ratification of the treaty concluded by her commissioners, or giving her time to send her

an instrument that this their act was allowed to be good, lawful, and not prejudicial to the crown of Scotland. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 27th August 1560.

¹ Original MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 18th August 1560. Also, Acts of Parliament, vol. ii. p. 605.

² Keith is at a loss to know how long they sat after the 24th. The point is settled by a letter of Lethington to Cecil, MS. State-paper Office, Original, 27th August 1560.—"Although our Parliament be not ended, it is for the present on good respects dissolved."

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 7th September 1560. "The Lord St John departeth, as it is said, the 12th of this present."

commission for the calling a parliament, the three estates had assembled of their own authority, and by a series of acts more sweeping than any that had ever passed in the preceding history of the country, had introduced innovations which it was impossible could be regarded without alarm; they had overturned the established religion, and let loose against all who ventured to adhere to the belief of their fathers the fury of religious persecution; they had entered into a league with another kingdom; and, as if conscious of the illegal nature of their proceedings, had attempted to protect themselves against the punishment of the laws, by giving a pretended parliamentary sanction to the most violent of their measures. The truth of these assertions could not be denied; and when the young queen, and her advisers the Guises, contrasted the conduct of the parliament towards Elizabeth with the manner in which they treated their sovereign, to whom they pretended all loyalty and affection, they could not fail to be mortified with the difference. So completely were English interests predominant in the assembly of the estates, that Lethington and Moray in all important measures received the advice of Elizabeth and her ministers; and so far was this carried, that Cecil drew up and transmitted to them the scroll of the act which was to be passed in their assembly.⁴ In an interview which took place, soon after Sandilands' arrival, between Throckmorton, the English ambassador, and the Cardinal Lorraine, the feelings of this proud minister upon the subject were strongly intimated. "I will tell you frankly," said the cardinal, "the Scots, the king's subjects, do perform no part of their duties; the king and the queen have the name of their sovereigns, and

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 29th August, 1560, Lethington to Cecil. It appears by this letter, that Cecil had framed the draft of an act for the Scottish parliament, confirming the treaty of Berwick, but it came too late. Their own act, however, was the same in substance, and almost in words.

your mistress hath the effect and the obedience. They would bring the realm to a republic, and say, in their words, they are the king's subjects; to tell you of the particular disorders were too long—every man doth what he lists. All this is too far out of order; and when fault is found with them, they threaten the king with the aid of the queen your mistress. Let your mistress either make them obedient subjects, or let her rid her hands of them; for rather than they shall be at this point, the king will quit all. They have made a league with the queen your mistress without us: what manner of dealing is this of subjects? Thereupon it is they bear themselves so proudly. . . . They have sent hither a mean man, in post to the king and queen their sovereigns, and to the queen your mistress a great and solemn legation. . . . This great legation, quoth he, goeth for the marriage of the queen your mistress with the Earl of Arran. What shall she have with him? I think her heart too great to marry with such a one as he is; and one of the queen's subjects.”¹

Immediately after this, the English ambassador was admitted to an audience of the young Queen of France. It is interesting to observe Mary's first appearance. Throckmorton entreated her to ratify the treaty, and complained that this had been too long deferred.—“Such answer,” said the young queen, “as the king, my lord and husband, and his council, hath made you in that matter might suffice; but, because you shall know I have reason to do as I do, I will tell you what moveth me to refuse to ratify the treaty: my subjects in Scotland do their duty in nothing, nor have they performed one point that belongeth unto them. I am their queen, and so they call me; but they use me not so. They have done what pleaseth them; and though I have not many faithful subjects there, yet those few that be there on my party were not present when these matters were

done, nor at this assembly. I will have them assemble by my authority, and proceed in their doings after the laws of the realm, which they so much boast of and keep none of them. They have sent hither a poor gentleman to me, whom I disdain to have come in the name of them all to the king and me in such a legation. They have sent great personages to your mistress. I am their sovereign, but they take me not so. They must be taught to know their duties.” “In this speech,” continues Throckmorton, “the queen uttered some choler and stomach against them. I said, ‘As to the Lord of St John, I know him not; but he is Great Prior of Scotland, and you know by others what rank that estate hath, equal to any earl within your realm.’—The queen answered, ‘I do not take him for Great Prior, for he is married; I marvel how it happeneth they could send other manner of men to your mistress.’—I said, ‘Madam, I have heard that if your majesty do proceed graciously with the Lord St John, in observation of all that which was by the Bishop of Valence and Mons. de Randan promised in the king's and your name, the nobles and states of Scotland do mind to send unto the king and you a greater legation.’—‘Then the king and I,’ quoth she, ‘must begin with them.’—‘Madam,’ quoth I, ‘I am sorry the ratification of the treaty is refused; for that matter, together with other injuries offered to the queen my mistress, (as, contrary to the express articles of the treaty, the king and you do bear openly the arms of England,) will give the queen, my mistress, occasion greatly to suspect your well meaning unto her.’—‘Mine uncles,’ quoth she, ‘have sufficiently answered you in this matter; and for your part, I pray you, do the office of a good minister betwixt us, and so shall you do well.’ And so,” concludes Throckmorton, “the queen dismissed me, and Mons. de Lansac brought me to my horse.”²

¹ MS. Letter, French Correspondence, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 17th November 1560.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, 17th November 1560. The letter, which has never been printed, is highly interesting.

When it is recollect that the young queen was now only sixteen, it must be admitted that in this conversation with one of the ablest ministers of Elizabeth she acquitted herself with uncommon spirit and good sense. Nor can we blame either her or the Guises for their steady refusal to ratify the treaty. Her commissioners, Monluc and Randan, had received positive instructions from Mary to treat with England, but not to include her Scottish subjects, or recognise their league with Elizabeth; yet they suffered themselves to be overreached by the crafty diplomacy of Cecil, and not only included them, but virtually recognised their whole proceedings. Encouraged by this, the Protestants had assembled a parliament; had adjourned for so short a period that it was impossible for the ratification and commission of their sovereign to arrive; had hurried forward its proceedings; formed a council of regency, composed chiefly of those who were opposed to France; entered anew into the league with England; and lastly, had directed to that country an embassy, the object of which was to place themselves under the guidance and protection of Elizabeth. When Lord St John arrived, therefore, and in the name of the Congregation requested the queen to confirm these proceedings, we need not be surprised that he met with a positive and somewhat peremptory refusal. (But although Mary complained of his inferior rank, as compared with Glencairn, Morton, and Lethington, the ambassadors to England, St John was received with courtesy.) He was admitted to an audience with the young queen and the Cardinal of Lorraine; exhorted, with earnestness, to act the part of an upright minister between his sovereign and her subjects; and dismissed with a letter addressed by the king and queen to the estates of Scotland.¹ Before his de-

parture, however, Sandilands, alarmed at the prospects of the Congregation, had a private interview with the English ambassador, in which he entreated him to recommend "the ordering of their affairs in Scotland" to the English queen, observing, that unless she undertook the management, he foresaw that they would inevitably fall out amongst themselves and be undone.²

The secret policy of France at this period towards Scotland was watched and detected by Throckmorton with much ability. The Guises had resolved at present to remain at peace, and wait till they discovered in what manner Elizabeth received the embassy which was to propose to her a marriage with Arran. If she declined the match, and treated the overtures of the Protestants with coldness, they determined to sow jealousies between the reformers and their patroness; to persuade the Scots that she had acted solely from a desire to aggrandise herself; and induce them to continue the old amity with France. With this view, they proposed to detach Arran from the Congregation by high offers: he was to marry a daughter of France, to be made lieutenant for the king and queen in Scotland, to have the whole revenue of that realm for his entertainment, and to want nothing but the name of a king.³ If, on the other

been erroneously stated that "the Cardinal of Lorraine loaded him with reproaches, accused him of perjury, denominated his friends execrable heretics, and dismissed him without an answer." This is the account of Dr Cook, (*History of the Reformation*, vol. ii. pp. 341, 342,) who was misled by Keith, whilst Keith was himself misled by Buchanan. Contrast this with the following passage from Throckmorton's Letter of 28th November 1560, to Queen Elizabeth:—"The Lord St John had his dépesche here the 26th of this month. He took not his leave of the king by reason of his indisposition, but of the queen and the Cardinal Lorraine. He had very good words, and was required to use the part and office of a good minister towards the estates of Scotland, and of a good subject towards his sovereigns. He hath a letter from the king and queen to the said estates, the copy whereof I send your majesty here-with."

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 28th November 1560.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French

¹ Letter, MS. State-paper Office, French Correspondence, 17th November 1560, and 28th November 1560, to the Queen. I am the more careful to note the manner of his reception and dismissal—which I take from Throckmorton, who was on the spot, and in daily intercourse with him—because it has

hand, they found the queen disposed to follow the advice of Cecil, and entertain the league of mutual friendship and defence with Scotland, they had projected to weaken the Congregation, by creating jealousies amongst its leaders, to sow dissension between Arran and the Lord James, and to bestow the whole of the benefices and offices of the kingdom in raising a party against England. To traverse these schemes, the English ambassador advised Elizabeth to employ Clark, one of the archers of the French guard, a subtle and intriguing agent of his, who had been bred up as a spy in France; he accordingly left that country with letters of recommendation to the queen, and being sent into Scotland, pursued his treacherous vocation with great activity and success.¹

Although the policy of the Guisian faction was for the moment watchful and pacific, their motive was merely to gain time: their main purpose continued the same as before—the destruction of the party of the Reformation in Europe. To put down the Huguenots in France, to encourage the Romanists in England and Scotland, to sow dissensions amongst the Protestant princes of Germany, to support the Council of Trent now sitting, and, in a word, to concentrate the whole strength of France, Spain, Italy, and the Empire, against that great moral and religious revolution, by which light and truth were struggling to free themselves from the trammels of many long-established errors, was the chief object to which they directed their efforts.

Under the regency of the queen-dowager, the affairs of Scotland had been intrusted principally to D'Osell, a man of talent and a good officer, but rash and overbearing. On the return, however, of Monluc, bishop of Valence, with Martignes, to the French court, D'Osell, who it was generally

Correspondence, 10th October 1560, Throckmorton to the Lords of the Council.

¹ MS. Letter, French Correspondence, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to the Queen, 28th November 1560.

supposed would have the chief voice in Scottish affairs, lost the royal favour, and found himself entirely passed over. The cause of his disgrace, as stated by Throckmorton, in a letter to Elizabeth, presents us with an appalling picture of the dark policy of the Guises. At the commencement of the religious troubles in Scotland, the Bishop of Amiens, De la Brosse, and Martignes, advised the queen-dowager to dissemble with the Congregation, to call a parliament at Leith or Edinburgh, and having got the chief leaders under one roof, to seize and put to death the most violent.² The queen-regent revolted from so base a proposal, and D'Osell compelled his less scrupulous associates to abandon it. But he now reaped the consequences: the prelate arraigned him as the origin of all the ill success in Scotland, and he found himself deprived of the favour of his sovereign.³

At this interesting crisis, when the Congregation regarded with anxiety the designs which were meditating against them; when Elizabeth hesitated upon the expediency of continuing to give them her active support, and the Guises waited only “till they had got money in their purses to follow their enterprises,”⁴ an event took place which drew after it important changes. The young French king, Francis the Second, who had for some time laboured under a languishing state of health, expired at Orleans on the 6th of December.⁵ His youthful consort, the Scottish queen, by whom he was ardently beloved, had watched over him with devoted care and affection, and for some time appeared inconsolable; but the energy of her character soon recovered its ascend-

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to the Queen, 10th October 1560.

³ Ibid., Poissy.

⁴ Ibid., Throckmorton to the Council.

⁵ I note the day, as it is differently stated by our general historians. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, 6th December 1560. Throckmorton to Elizabeth. “The 6th of this present, at 11 o'clock of the night, he departed to God.”

ency, and recalled her to the duties she had to perform, and the difficulties by which she was surrounded. Throckmorton, an eye-witness of her behaviour, soon after the event, addressed the following letter to the council, which contains an interesting view, not only of the character of the young queen, but a sketch, by the hand of a master, of the position of parties, and the projected policy of England. “My very good lords: Now that God hath thus disposed of the late French king, whereby the Scottish queen is left a widow, in my simple judgment, one of the special things your lordships have to consider, and to have an eye to, is the marriage of that queen. During her husband’s life there was no great account made of her; for that, being under band of marriage and subjection of her husband, who carried the burden and care of all her matters, there was offered no great occasion to know what was in her. But since her husband’s death, she hath shewed, and so continueth, that she is both of great wisdom for her years, modesty, and also of great judgment, in the wise handling herself and her matters; which, increasing in her with her years, cannot but turn to her commendation, reputation, honour, and great benefit of her and her country. And already it appeareth, that some such as made no great account of her, do now, seeing her wisdom, both honour and pity her.

“Immediately upon her husband’s death, she changed her lodging, withdrew herself from all company, became so solitary and exempt of all worldliness, that she doth not to this day see daylight, and thus will continue out forty days. For the space of fifteen days after the death of her said husband, she admitted no man to come unto her chamber, but the king, his brethren, the King of Navarre, the constable, and her uncles. About four or five days after that, she was content to admit some bishops, and the ancient knights of the order, and none of the younger, saving Martignes, who having done her good service, and married the chief gentlewoman

of her chamber, had so much favour shewed him among the rest. The ambassadors also were lastly admitted, as they came, who have been all with her to condole, saving I, which I have forborne to do, knowing not the queen’s majesty’s pleasure in that behalf.

“Amongst others, the ambassador of Spain hath been with her above an hour together, which is thought to be for more than the ceremony of condoling required. He hath also since that time dined, and had great conference with the Cardinal of Lorraine; and though I cannot yet think that it be about any matter of marriage for her with the Prince of Spain—for I think the Council of Spain too wise to think upon it without other commodity—yet, it is not amiss to hearken to the matter; for she, using herself as she beginneth, will make herself to be beloved, and to lack no good means of offers. But to conclude herein: as long as the matter shall be well handled in England, and that now, in time, good occasions be not let pass, the king of Spain will have little mind that way. As for my part, I see her behaviour to be such, and her wisdom and queenly modesty so great, in that she thinketh herself not too wise, but is content to be ruled by good counsel and wise men, (which is a great virtue in a prince or princess, and which argueth a great judgment and wisdom in her,) that by these means she cannot do amiss. And I cannot but fear her proceedings with the time, if any means be left, and offered her to take advantage by.

“I understand very credibly,” continued the ambassador, “that the said Scottish queen is desirous to return into Scotland: marry, she would so handle the matter as that the desire should not seem nor appear to come of herself, nor of her seeking, but by the request and suit of the subjects of Scotland. To compass which device she hath sent one Robert Lesley (who pretendeth title to the earldom of Rothes) into Scotland, to work by such as are hers; and besides them, doubteth nothing to procure to her a

good many of those that were lately against her; and among others, she holdeth herself sure of the Lord James, and of all the Stewards, wholly to be at her devotion. She mistrusteth none but the Duke of Chastelherault and his party; and besides these, she nothing doubteth to assure to her, with easy persuasions, the whole, or the most part, of those that carried themselves indifferently as neuters all this while, who are thought to be many besides the common people. And now to have their queen home [they] will altogether, she thinketh, lean and incline to her. Upon request, thus to be made to her by these nobles, requiring to have her return; she will demand that the principal forts and holds of the realm be delivered into her hands, or to such for her as she will appoint, to the end that she may be more assured against the evil meaning of the hollow-hearted, or such as fear the worst towards themselves. She doth also work that those that shall thus request her to come into Scotland, shall offer and promise all obedience and duty belonging to loving and obedient subjects; whom she will, for her part, recompense by all the favour, assurance, and benevolence that a prince can promise and owe to good subjects. This matter, my lords, being worth good consideration, I leave to your lordships' grave wisdoms to consider of it."¹

The news of the young king's death was received by the party of the Congregation in Scotland with extraordinary exultation. The ministers not only justly considered the event as a great deliverance, but in the intolerant spirit of the times, represented it as a special judgment inflicted upon an infidel and stubborn prince.² Throck-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to the Council, 31st December 1560.

² "When all things," says Knox, "were in readiness to shed the blood of innocents; the Eternal, our God, who ever watcheth for the preservation of His own, began to work, and suddenly did put His own work in execution; for as the king sat at mass, he was suddenly struck with an aposthume, in that deaf ear which would never hear the truth of God. . . . When his glory perished, and the

morton, with greater charity, called upon his royal mistress to thank God, who by these incomprehensible means had provided for her surety and quietness.³ Lethington, with the quick prospective glance of a statesman, pronounced that the king's death must have the effect of changing materially the line of their policy;⁴ whilst the leaders of the opposite parties, which had so long separated the state, transmitted assurances of fidelity, and offers of service, to their youthful sovereign.

In the meantime, all agreed that a parliament must be summoned; and the three estates having assembled at Edinburgh on the 16th of January, Lord St John, who had been overtaken on his journey by the news of the king's death, laid before them the letter with which he had been intrusted by their sovereign and her late husband. It informed them that their envoy had assured her of their earnest wish to remain faithful and obedient subjects; but in the account which she had received of the proceedings of their late assembly, (so she termed the parliament in which they had established the reformed faith,) she lamented to observe how far their conduct had deviated from their professions. Yet so anxious was she for their return to their duty, that she had resolved to despatch two noble persons as her envoys into Scotland, bearing her commission to convene a legal parliament, in which their requests should be fully considered, and their faults buried and forgotten.⁵

It was evident to the Lords of the Congregation, that the king's death, which happened three weeks after this letter was written, must have the effect of altering, in a great degree, the

pride of his stubborn heart evanished in smoke."—Knox, p. 280.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 6th December 1560.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 6th February 1560-1, Scots Correspondence.

⁵ MS. Letter, copy, State-paper Office, Orleans, 17th November 1560.

mutual relations between them and their sovereign; they saw, at the same time, that much would depend upon the policy of England; and they therefore turned with anxiety to receive the reply of Elizabeth to their late embassy.¹ It was favourable, so far as she assured them that their thankful acceptance of her assistance, and the good fruits which had resulted from it, would encourage her to proffer the same aid, should they ever require it in their defence. She declined the offer of marriage with the Earl of Arran, but in terms flattering to the estates and to himself, acknowledging their goodwill in offering to her the choicest person whom they had, and pronouncing him a noble gentleman of great worthiness: she concluded by earnestly recommending unanimity amongst themselves, warning them of the practices which might still be attempted against them, and (with a glance towards France) declared her readiness to enter into a common defence against any common enemy.²

Having weighed these answers, it was determined by the parliament that their sovereign, who was now unfettered by any ties to France, should be invited to return to her own dominions, and that her brother, the Lord James, the chief leader of the Congregation, should instantly proceed as an ambassador to that kingdom, to declare their wishes upon this point. It might have been imagined that this potent person, who had made himself so obnoxious to the Guisian faction, would have declined this dangerous mission. But although the task was delicate and difficult, there were circumstances which convinced him, that if he was to retain the power he now possessed, he must embrace it. The Earl of Huntly, the head of the Roman Catholic party, his principal rival, and the only man whose strength and abilities he dreaded, had already assem-

bled his friends, and he was anxious to anticipate any message they might send to France.³ Even before the king's death, the Lord James had entered into a correspondence with the young queen, in which he solicited the renewal of his French pension; and, in reply, Mary had assured him, that if he would return to his duty, not only the pension awaited him, but the highest favours that could be conferred, whether he disposed himself to be ecclesiastical or temporal.⁴

But whilst he thus prepared the way for a reconciliation with his own sovereign, and hoped to be intrusted with the principal management of her affairs, the Lord James had no intention of deserting the lucrative service of England. At the same moment he applied, through Throckmorton, to Cecil, requesting a recompence out of some abbey, or pension in his own country, for the losses he had sustained.⁵ He resolved also to visit London on his road to France, and, in an interview with Elizabeth, to acquaint that princess with the purport of his message, and the course of conduct which he and his party had determined to follow. If the Congregation found that their sovereign, listening to the counsel of the house of Guise, which had already occasioned a civil war, meant to renew its horrors by bringing with her a foreign force, they had resolved not to receive her, but to communicate the matter to the Queen of England, who, says Lethington, will have power to command what she thinketh rathest⁶ to be fol-

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Scots Correspondence, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, 23d December 1560. Also, original MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 7th September 1560. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original, Randolph to Cecil, 23d September 1560.

⁴ MS. Letter, French Correspondence, State-paper Office, 29th November 1560, Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Cecil, 29th November 1560. "If," says Throckmorton, "the allotment of his recompence could be so used as the Earl of Arran might be seen to be the principal doer thereof, it would, in my opinion, do no harm."

⁶ Rathest, earliest—if used in its old English meaning; but here, from the context, it

¹ The Ambassadors returned 3d January, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 3d January 1560-1.

² British Museum, Caligula, book x. folio 133. A copy from the original in Lord Burleigh's hand. 8th December 1560. Printed in Keith, p. 156.

lowed, without whose advice, he adds, "we dare not enterprise any great thing."¹ If, on the contrary, Mary was content to come home, unaccompanied by any foreign force, and to repose her confidence in her own subjects, he was to assure her of their loyalty and affection, and to advise her to take her journey through England, where she might have an interview with Elizabeth, and from which her subjects would accompany her honourably to her own country.

One difficulty remained on the subject of religion. The young queen rigidly adhered to the Roman Catholic faith, yet it had by parliament been pronounced death for any one to hear mass; and the ministers of the Kirk admonished him, that if he consented that she should have that service performed either publicly or privately they would consider him as betraying the cause of God, and exposing religion to the utmost peril. He answered that he should never consent to the establishment of this idolatrous worship in public, but that he could not consent to the violent advice of those who would stop her from the private exercise of her own form of worship.² Having thus received his instructions, the parliament was prorogued till the 21st of May.

At the same time that the three estates committed this important mission to the Lord James, a secret convention was held by the Catholic party, which was attended by the Archbishop of St Andrews, the Bishops of Aberdeen, Moray, and Ross; the Earls of Huntly, Athole, Crawford, Sutherland, Marshal, Caithness, and many other barons, who intrusted Lesley, then official of Aberdeen and afterwards Bishop of Ross, with a commission to repair to the French court, and present to their sovereign their offers of service and expressions of devoted attachment.

The departure of both envoys, however, seems rather to be used in the sense of "preferred."

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 6th February 1560-1.

² British Museum, MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 458.

ever, was delayed by the arrival of four commissioners from the queen.³ These were Preston of Craigmillar, Ogilvy of Findlater, Lumsden of Blanearn, and Lesley of Auchtermuchty. The message which they brought from their royal mistress was full of affection and conciliation. She assured them that she meant shortly to return home; that all offences should be forgiven, and that the few French soldiers who still remained in garrison within Dunbar and the Inch should be sent out of the country. She informed them that offers of marriage had been already made to her on the part of the Prince of Spain and the Kings of Sweden and Denmark, but that she had resolved to entertain none of these proposals till she could in person consult her nobles, and receive the assent of her people. To them she looked, and to their support, as the only sure foundation of her greatness.⁴ They presented at the same time a commission directed to seven leading men in Scotland—the Duke of Chastelherault, Argyle, Athole, Huntly, Bothwell, the Lord James, and the Archbishop of St Andrews—directing them to summon a parliament, and notifying that the French king had resolved to despatch Monsieur de Noailles to propose to the three estates the renewal of the ancient league between France and Scotland, a proposal which met with her hearty concurrence. Mary seized this moment earnestly to recommend to her subjects, of all parties, the duty of mutual forbearance and forgiveness. She addressed letters to almost every leading man in Scotland, assuring those who had most offended against her that she was determined to forget all injuries, and to continue them in their offices of trust if they would but faithfully serve her.⁵

At the time when these messengers arrived from the queen, Scotland was

³ 20th February 1560-1.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 26th February 1560-1.

⁵ MS. Letter, French Correspondence, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 23d January 1560-1. MS. Instructions to the four Commissioners, State-paper Office, without date.

divided, as we are informed by the Secretary Lethington, into three parties.¹ The first he denominates the neutrals, who, as they were before this careless of the commonweal, were now ready to receive whatever was propounded to them under the shadow of the prince's command, without examination either of its justice or its consequences. The second faction consisted of the Duke of Chastelherault and the friends of his house : he considered his only security to be a marriage between Arran, his eldest son, and Mary. In advising this the sole councillor and confidant of Arran was Knox; to promote it Forbes, a confidential friend of the Hamiltons, had already proceeded on a secret mission to France, and although the queen was too cautious to commit herself, the messenger was received with favour, and an answer returned which at least did not extinguish his hopes.² The third party is described by the same acute statesman, himself an eye-witness and principal leader amongst them, as important alike in numbers, rank, and power. It was their opinion that every method should be adopted to persuade their sovereign to return into her own realm, where they were ready to secure for her a favourable reception, under the single condition that she came without a foreign force, and was content to govern by her own subjects. If she consented to this it was his belief that ways would easily be found to induce her to favour the religion, confirm the treaty with England, and reform all abuses. Lethington concluded the letter which gives us this information by pointing out to Cecil the dangers which must follow the renewal of the league with France, and anticipated his own certain ruin if the amity with England were dissolved. "I pray you," says he, "consider what danger it is for me to write. Many men's eyes look upon me; my familiarity with that realm is known, and so far misliked, that I learn it

shall be my undoing, unless the queen may be made favourable to England, which I fear shall be hard to do."³ Nor was he singular in this opinion, the whole party of the Congregation looking to Elizabeth as their surest protection against the designs of France and the anticipated resentment of their sovereign.

On the first intelligence of the death of Francis, this princess prepared to pursue that cautious and double policy which should preserve her interest in Scotland at the least possible expense to herself. She despatched the Earl of Bedford to present her condolences to Mary, and to assure her of her warmest wishes for the continuance of peace between her own kingdom and Scotland, but to require at the same time the confirmation of the treaty of Edinburgh, concluded by her commissioners, and of which the ratification, she contended, had been delayed on frivolous pretences.⁴ It was to be a main part of Bedford's duty to persuade the queen to give the same freedom to her country that it had enjoyed during the reign of her father, James the Fifth, which consisted chiefly in its being governed by its own laws, and ruled by means of its "natural or born" people. He was to remind her how quiet the kingdom had remained since the removal of the French troops; to declare that for the last hundred years the Borders had not enjoyed so much peace as at present; and if he discovered any disposition in the house of Guise to promote her marriage with Spain or Austria, he was to incite the King of Navarre and the Protestant party in France to oppose it as contrary to his own greatness and the best interests of Christendom.⁵ Soon after this Elizabeth instructed Randolph, then resident as her envoy at the Scottish capital, in the policy which he ought to pursue. He was directed to inform the leaders of the Protestants of the league lately re-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 26th Feb. 1560-1, Lethington to Cecil.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Randolph to Cecil, 3d Jan. 1560-1.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 26th February 1560-1.

⁴ MS. Instructions, State-paper Office, Sir J. Williamson's Collection, first series, vol. xix. p. 547, 20th January 1560-1. ⁵ Ibid.

newed amongst the princes of Germany for their mutual defence against the pope and his adherents, and to show them how earnestly they had exhorted her to continue firm in her religion. He was to express her determination to adhere to the great principles of the Reformation, to exhort the Scottish reformers to labour for the continuance of the peace with England, and to persuade them against the renewal of the ancient unprofitable alliance with France.¹

Bedford arrived at Paris on the 3d of February, and on the 15th of that month proceeded to the court at Fontainebleau, where he delivered his message to the Scottish queen.² He was received by Mary with the courteous and winning manners for which she was so remarkable: she expressed her kindly feelings towards Elizabeth, and her desire to remain in amity with England, but steadily declined to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh³ till she had returned to her kingdom and consulted the wishes of her parliament. The interview is minutely described in an original letter of Bedford and Throckmorton to the Privy-council. They were conducted to the presence of the Queen of Scotland by D'Osell, who had been restored to favour and made her knight of honour; and, on being pressed to show her desire of peace with Elizabeth, by confirming the treaty of Edinburgh without more delay, Mary replied, "that there were more reasons to persuade to amity between Elizabeth her good sister and herself, than between any two princes in all Christendom; we are both (said she) in one isle, both of one language, both the nearest kinswomen that each other hath, and both queens: As to the treaty of Edinburgh, I am here, (she continued,) as you see, without all counsel; my uncle, (the Cardinal of

¹ Haynes, State Papers, p. 366, 17th March 1560-1.

² State-paper Office, French Correspondence, 12th February, 1560-1; also State-paper Office, Sir J. Williamson's Collection, first series, vol. xix. p. 585, Report of Bedford and Throckmorton to the Privy-council.

³ Supra, p. 123.

Lorraine,) who hath the ordering of all my affairs, and by whom (as reason is) I ought to be advised, is not here presently; and, Mons. l'Ambassadeur, it is also the queen my good sister's advice, that I should take the counsel of the nobles and wise men of mine own realm, as hath been declared by you unto me. You know well enough, (quoth she,) here are none of them, but I look to have some of them here shortly; and then will I make the queen such an answer as she will be pleased with." The Earl of Bedford again insisted that she was bound in honour immediately to grant a ratification, which had been already too long delayed. "Helas! my lord," interrupted Mary, "what would you have me do? I have no council here; the matter is great to ratify a treaty; and especially for one of my years:" she was then eighteen. The sagacious Throckmorton then attempted to reply to these reasonable scruples: "Madam," said he, "Mons. de Guise, your uncle, is here present, by whom, I think, as reason is, you will be advised. I see others here also of whom you have been pleased to take counsel; the matter is not such but that you may proceed without any great delay, seeing it hath been promised so often that it should be ratified." "Helas! Mons. l'Ambassadeur, (quoth she,) for those things that were done in my late husband's time, I am not to be charged, for then I was under his obedience; and now I would be loath to do anything unadvisedly; but because it is a great matter, I pray you give me respite till I speak with you again;" with which answer the ambassadors were contented for the time. But when taking their leave Mary recalled Throckmorton; "Mons. l'Ambassadeur," said she pleasantly, "I have to challenge you with breach of promise: you can remember that you promised me, in case I would send to the queen my good sister my picture, that I should have hers in recompense thereof; and because I made no small account of the same, I was very glad that that condition was offered me to have it.

You know I have sent mine to the queen my good sister according to my promise, but have not received hers : I pray you, therefore, procure that I may have it, whereof I am so desirous, and now more than before, that I shall think the time long till I have it."

On the morrow, Bedford and Throckmorton having obtained a second audience, reminded Mary of her promise to give them her final answer : " My lord," quoth the queen, " inasmuch as I have none of the nobles of my realm of Scotland here, to take advice of, by whom the queen, my good sister, doth advise me to be counselled, I dare not, nor think not good, to ratify this said treaty ; and, as you know, if I shoule do any act that might concern the realm, without their advice and counsel, it were like [likely] I should have them such subjects unto me, as I have had them. But for all such matters as be past, I have forgotten them ; and at the questiⁿ my good sister's desire I have pardoned them, trusting that I shall find them hereafter, by her good means, better and more loving subjects than they have been. Whether I have cause to think amiss of them or no, I durst put it to her judgment. This, my lord, I pray you think concerning the ratification of the treaty : I do not refuse to ratify it because I do not mind to do it;¹ nor I use not these delays as excuses to shift off the matter ; for if my counsel were here, I would give you such an answer as should satisfy you. And I pray you to tell the queen, my good sister, I trust, ere it be long, some of the nobility and council of Scotland will be here, for I do hear they mean to send some shortly unto me : *peradventure you know it as well as I.* And when I shall have communed with them, I mind to send my good sister the queen, your mistress, such an answer as I trust she shall be pleased with it ; for I mean to send one of mine own unto her ere it be long. In the meantime, I pray you, declare unto her from me, that I would

we might speak together, and then I trust we should satisfy each other much better than we can do by messages and ministers. This the queen my sister may assure herself of, that she shall find none more willing to embrace her friendship and amity than I ; and there is none that ought to take more place with her than me. She can consider in what state I am in, and what need I have to have the amity of such a one as she is. Tell her, I pray you, how much I am desirous to see her, and also that I am in good hope it will come to pass." " And thus," concluded the ambassadors in their letter to the Privy-council, " after many good words to and fro, we took our leave of her : marry she forgot not to pray us both once again to remember to procure that she might have the queen's majesty's picture."²

Not long after the return of Bedford, the Lord James having consulted with Lethington and his party on the policy which they should pursue, repaired to the English court ; there in an interview with Elizabeth, who pressed him to procure the ratification of the treaty of Edinburgh, he assured that princess, that in his present visit to the queen his sister he bore no public commission ; it was dictated, he said, solely by his own private feelings ; and the only message he conveyed from the nobility and council was a general declaration of their duty and devotion to their sovereign.³ But although Moray declined to press Mary on this subject of the treaty, he did not fail to inform Elizabeth minutely regarding the intended proceedings of himself and his friends. " The Lord James," said Lethington, addressing Cecil, and alluding to the journey, " mindeth to sue to the queen's majesty [Elizabeth] for a passport,

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office. The Earl of Bedford and Sir N. Throckmorton, to the Privy-council, 26th February 1560-1. Sir J. Williamson's Collection, vol. xix. p. 54.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Elizabeth to Sir N. Throckmorton, draft by Cecil, 29th March 1561. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Scots Correspondence, 7th Feb. 1560, the Lord James to Cecil.

¹ She means to say, " My present refusal does not proceed from any resolution not to ratify it."

and in his passage to make her highness participant as well of that he hath in charge as what he mindeth to do. You know somewhat of his nature, and I dare undertake that he is no dissembler.¹ With Cecil also the same ambitious and able man held a private consultation ; and it is curious to observe that between two such consummate politicians as Cecil and Throckmorton there existed a difference of opinion as to the propriety of permitting him to take his journey into France. Throckmorton, then minister at the French court, a witness to the skilfulness of Guisian diplomacy, and not insensible to the fascination of the manners of the young queen, dreaded that he would be gained over by the bribes which were preparing for him ; or, should his integrity or his self-interest resist these temptations, that some means would be found to detain him in France. "I understand," says this ambassador, in a letter to Queen Elizabeth, "that the Lord James of Scotland is appointed to come hither to the Queen of Scotland. I am very sorry for it, and so shall be still, till I see the contrary of that fall out, which I yet fear by his coming. I learn that this king, by means of the Queen of Scotland, deviseth all the means he can to win him to his devotion; and for that purpose hath both procured the red hat for him if he will accept it, and also mindeth to endow him with good abbeys and benefices in this realm. If advancement or fair words shall win him, he shall not want the one or the other. If he so much esteem the religion he professeth, and the honour of his country and himself that none of these things shall win him to this devotion, then it is to be feared that they will work ways to keep him still by fair or foul means. . . . On the other side, if he will be won, then your majesty knoweth he may be, and it is like he will be, the most perilous man to your majesty and your realm of all the realm of Scotland, and most able to stand this king in his best stead for the matters there : so that

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, Feb. 6, 1560-1.

his coming cannot but prejudice every way ; and I believe verily if he come, he will not return into Scotland soon as he thinketh."²

Cecil, however, knew that the Lord James was devotedly attached to England. From the correspondence with Lethington, he was aware that both Maitland and he considered their own safety as inseparably connected with the maintenance of their fidelity to Elizabeth ; and having concerted their measures together, the English secretary felt little disposition to distrust the Scottish envoy, but treating him with the highest courtesy, dismissed him with earnest injunctions to attend to his personal safety.³

Having arrived at Paris, Moray found that the queen his sovereign was then at Rheims, to which place he proceeded, after having consulted with Throckmorton, and delivered to that minister the letters he had received from Cecil.⁴ He found himself anticipated by Lesley the envoy of Huntley, who professed to represent the Catholic party. This able man, the very day before her brother was admitted, had solicited and obtained an interview with the Queen. It seems, however, to have produced little effect upon the mind of Mary. She had been impressed with an unfavourable opinion of Huntley, from his late wavering and crafty conduct. Although he professed an unshaken attachment to the Romish faith, and made the warmest professions of loyalty to his sovereign, this powerful noble had, scarcely a year before, joined the party of the Congregation, upon an understanding that he should be supported in his power in the north, and share in the ecclesiastical prizes which the leaders were then dividing

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to the Queen, Paris, March 31, 1561.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Cecil to Throckmorton, April 4, 1561.

⁴ He arrived some time before the 9th of April, and did not see his sovereign the queen, till the 14th of the same month. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Cecil, 9th April 1561.

amongst them.¹ When, therefore, Lessley brought from him his assurances of fidelity, warned his mistress to beware of the intrigues and ambition of her brother the Lord James, and hinted that he had designs against the crown, it is not surprising that Mary listened to his communication with incredulity.² She, however, received the envoy with kindness, and commanded him to remain near her person.³

To Moray her behaviour was more warm and confidential. He came to her, as he stated, not with any public commission, but impelled by his affection, and anxious to offer her his services, as one who knew the state of parties in her dominions; and so completely did his blunt and open deportment impress her with an opinion of his integrity, that in a few days he had gained a decided influence over the mind of his sovereign. He appears, in his manner of managing this difficult mission, to have acted with great address and duplicity. His object, according to the expressive phrase of Lethington, was to "grop the mind of the young queen," and having discovered her intentions, to shape his counsels and his conduct so as best to secure the interests of the Congregation, the friendship of Elizabeth, and the preservation of his own power. Had Mary been aware that the man in whom she was about to confide had already made Elizabeth and Cecil participant in his intentions, and that nothing was to be done in Scottish matters without consulting the English queen, she would have hesitated before she gave entire credit to one so likely to abuse it; but of this she was ignorant; and the Catholic party, who had attempted to put her on her guard, were not themselves above suspicion. D'Osell, in whom she placed much confidence, was untrue to her; and, acting in the interest of Elizabeth,⁴

advised her to confide implicitly in the Lord James. Her temper was open and unsuspecting; and one of the most fatal faults in her character was the facility with which her affections were engaged, and the dangerous and rapid reliance she was disposed to place in all whom she trusted. She listened, therefore, to her brother with a generous forgetfulness of the part which, as she believed, his conscientious adherence to the reformed faith had compelled him to take against her; and when he pressed her to return to her dominions, and assured her of a cordial welcome from himself and her subjects,⁵ she flattered herself his protestations were sincere, and disclosed to him her intentions with an imprudent precipitation. She declared that she would never ratify the treaty of Edinburgh till she came into Scotland and took the advice of her parliament. She did not scruple to admit, that the amity between England and Scotland was little agreeable to her, and that, considering the terms of the league lately made betwixt the two realms, she was anxious to have it dissolved. It was evident also to the Lord James, from the expressions of the queen, that she would never marry the Earl of Arran; but was anxious to procure the consent of her subjects to a union with some foreign prince. She had sent her commands that no parliament should be assembled, and no business of importance concluded, till she had personally met with her people; and she confessed that her present intention was to return to Scotland, not through England, but by sea.⁶

Notwithstanding all this, there is reason to believe that an immediate return to her kingdom was not at this moment very anxiously desired by Mary. To leave France, where, as the queen of one of the first monarchies in Europe, she was accustomed

correspondence of Throckmorton and Cecil, in the State-paper Office.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Cecil, 26th July 1561, Paris.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 29th April 1561.

¹ MS. State-paper Office, "My Lord of Huntley's desires and counsel," 18th April 1560.

² Keith, p. 160.

³ Lesley, Bannatyne edition, p. 294.

⁴ This is quite apparent from the secret

to all the splendour and adulation attendant upon so high a rank, where she had been the attractive centre of a refined court, to repair to an inferior kingdom, inhabited by a ruder people, who spoke of her as an idolatress and an enemy, was sufficiently appalling. But other reasons weighed with her, and produced delay. Her hand was now solicited by some of the greatest princes on the Continent; and the same suitors who had courted Elizabeth, and whom that queen felt a pride in keeping in her train, now offered an unpardonable affront to her vanity by transferring their admiration to her beautiful rival. The King of Denmark, reputed to be by sea the strongest prince in Christendom, had offered to enter into a strict league with France, should he succeed in his addresses to Mary.¹ The King of Sweden had despatched an embassy proposing himself in marriage; and at this very time the jealous and busy eye of Throckmorton had detected a secret overture for a matrimonial alliance with the Prince of Spain, which created alarm to the English ambassador, and did not escape the watchful observation of the Lord James.² To gain time to conclude this negotiation was one great object of the Scottish queen; and with this view she was inclined to delay her immediate journey home, and intrust her affairs in the mean season to the management of the Lord James. But, prior to her final resolution, both the queen and the Guises endeavoured, with great earnestness, to induce him to embrace the creed of Rome. He was offered a cardinal's hat, and the highest advancement, should he prefer an ecclesiastical to a civil career; but he resisted every bribe, remaining true to the reformed faith and his engagements with England. This firmness in his purpose rather raised than lowered him in the esteem of the queen his sister. She imagined, but erroneously, that he who was thus guided

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, March 31, 1561.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Cecil, April 23, 1561.

by a conscientious adherence to the party of which he formed the head, would be equally true to her. She confided to him her intended measures regarding Scotland; and when he parted from her, she had promised him her commission to assume the government of the country till her arrival in her dominions, and engaged to send it to him by a gentleman whom he left behind for this purpose.³

On taking leave of his sovereign, the Lord James returned to Paris, and having secretly met the English ambassador, insidiously betrayed to him everything that had passed between Mary and himself. These particulars Throckmorton immediately communicated to Elizabeth,⁴ observing that the Scottish lord would himself detail the circumstances more particularly to her majesty when he came to her presence. It is of importance at this moment, to the full understanding of the secret history of this period, to attend to some of the passages of the letter addressed by the ambassador to that princess. "At this present," (29th April 1561,) says he, "thanks be to God, your majesty hath peace with all the world, and I see no occasion to move unto your majesty or your realm, any war from any place or person, but by the Queen of Scotland and her means; neither do I see any danger that may grow to your realm but by Scotland. Then wisdom doth advise your majesty to buy your

³ State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to the Queen, (Elizabeth,) 1st May 1561.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to the Queen, 29th April, 1561. It is to the preservation of this letter in the Correspondence of the State-paper Office that I owe the detection of Moray's intrigues with Elizabeth, and the disclosure of the duplicity with which he acted. I subjoin the passage which proves the assertion in the text, as it is of importance:—"When the Lord James, being the same day [22d April] arrived at this town, came to my lodging *secretly unto me*, and declared to me at good length all that had passed between the queen his sister and him, and between the Cardinal Lorraine and him. The circumstances whereof he will declare unto your majesty particularly when he cometh to your presence. I suppose he will be in England about the 10th or 12th of May."

surety, quietness, and felicity, though it cost you dear. The means to assure this is, in time, before any other put in his feet, his hire, and practices, to win unto your majesty's devotion and party, the mightiest, the wisest, and the most honest of the realm of Scotland. And though it be to your majesty great charge, as twenty thousand pounds yearly, yet it is in no wise to be omitted or spared. And in sorting your entertainment to every person, there should be some special consideration had of the Earl of Arran, because he is the second person of that realm, whose quality and credit your majesty knoweth better than I; and in like manner of the Lord James, whose credit, love, and honesty, is comparable, in my judgment, to any man of that realm. It is now your majesty's time, and never shall you have a better opportunity to work the Scottish affection to your devotion." Another passage from the same letter eulogising the Lord James, proves that Elizabeth had already, by some substantial consideration, or as Throckmorton expresses it, "some good turn," engaged him in her service; and demonstrates in strong language the system of corruption by which Throckmorton advised that the assistance of the leading lay reformers of Scotland should be secured. "Lastly," said he, "I do well perceive the Lord James to be a very honourable, sincere, and godly gentleman, and very much affected to your majesty, upon whom you never bestowed good turn better than on him, in my opinion. He is a man in my simple judgment, for many respects, much worthy to be cherished, and his amity to be well embraced and entertained: for besides his own well deserving, he is as well able to serve your majesty by himself and his friends, as any man there in Scotland; though the queen his sister will seek to bring in thither some puissant foreign power, to subject all upside down, or though she would seek to serve her turn and affection by some others of her nation that be inclined to greater legerity, inconstancy, and corruption. . . . For if I be not greatly de-

ceived, no man can tell yet, nor is able to ground a certain judgment, what shall become of the realm of Scotland. And therefore it shall be good for your majesty upon all events to retain and win as many friends there as you can, that if one will not serve your turn another may. There be attending here on the Lord James two men amongst others that are to be cherished by your majesty. The one is the Laird of Pitarrow, a grave wise man, and such a one as the Queen of Scotland, for God's cause and yours, doth much mislike. The other is Mr John Wood, secretary to the Lord James, a man in whom there is much virtue and sufficiency. There be two others which are well known to your majesty, which are in like case to be well cherished: the one is Alexander Clark, the other is Robert Melvin."¹ These passages sufficiently explain the extraordinary difficulties of Mary's situation, the venality of the times, and the lamentable want of principle in that class from which she was compelled to choose her counsellors.

The queen, on taking leave of her brother, had earnestly dissuaded him from visiting the French court or passing through England. She naturally dreaded the influence of the Protestant party in France, and of Elizabeth in England; and when she found that her wishes were not obeyed, she dismissed the gentleman, by whom he expected to receive the commission appointing him governor, with a brief intimation that she meant to intrust that authority to no person till her own arrival in her dominions. "The special cause," says Throckmorton, in writing to the Queen of England, "why she hath changed her opinion for the Lord James, as I hear, is that she could by no means dissuade him from his devotion and good opinion towards your majesty, and the observation of the league between your majesty and the realm of Scotland; and also, that neither she nor the Cardinal Lorraine could win nor divert

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 29th April 1561, Paris.

him from his religion, wherein they used very great means and persuasions. For which respects the said Lord James deserveth to be the more esteemed; and seeing he hath dealt so plainly with the queen his sovereign on your behalf, and shewed himself so constant in religion, that neither the fear of his sovereign's indignation could waver him, nor great promises win him, your majesty may, in my opinion, make good account of his constancy towards you: and so he deserveth to be well entertained and made of, as one that may stand you in no small stead for the advancement of your desire. And in case your majesty would now in time liberally and honourably consider him with some good means, to make him to be the more beholden to you, it would, in my simple judgment, serve your majesty to great purpose.¹

Moray having left Paris, passed over to Dover, and from thence to the English court. The step taken by the Scottish queen in withholding his promised commission as governor, convinced him that, since their interview, her policy had changed; his measures, therefore, experienced a similar alteration. He was suspected; the queen had resolved to return to her dominions sooner than he had contemplated; and it became necessary for him to provide against it. He knew from Throckmorton, whose sagacity penetrated into the whole system of the French intrigues in Scotland, that a strong Romish party was forming against him; "*love days*"² had been made amongst the papists³ by Mary's advice; Lethington, in a letter to Throckmorton, informed that minister that French gold, which had before this worked so much mischief in the country, might have the same effect again, if England grew lukewarm, and hinted at the necessity of bribing the leading men in Scotland. "I remember," said he,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to the Queen, 1st May, 1561, Paris.

² "Love days"—days of reconciliation and forgiveness.

³ Ibid., Throckmorton to Cecil, 21st May, Paris.

"one old verse of Chaucer, 'With empty hand men should no haukis lure, *sapienti pauca.*'"⁴

Meantime Moray, who remained at the English court, consulted with Elizabeth on the adoption of every method by which Mary might be detained in France: if this failed, and she set out on her journey, it was devised that means should be taken to intercept her on her passage to her dominions.⁵ Having acted this disingenuous part, he repaired to Scotland, fully instructed by Cecil in the policy which they thought proper to adopt. He found there Noailles the French ambassador, who, during his absence, had been sent by Mary to communicate her wishes and intention; and soon after his arrival, in the end of May,⁶ a convention of the nobility was held, in which the Protestant party carried some violent resolutions against renewing the league with France.⁷ At this assembly, Noailles the French ambassador received his audience, and having urged them to break with England, met with a decided refusal. They reminded him of the late cruel war which the French had carried on in Scotland, of the seasonable assistance of Elizabeth, and of the tyranny of the Romish clergy, whom, instead of pastors, they had found to be wolves, thieves, and murderers of the flock. To dissolve a righteous league which had been cemented in the name of God, and to enter again into alliance with those who were the sworn vassals of that papal tyranny, which they had cast off, was, they declared, a proceeding to which they never would give their consent.

With this reply Noailles returned to

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, copy, Lethington to Throckmorton, 10th June 1561, Edinburgh.

⁵ Copy sent at the time to Elizabeth. State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to the Lord James, 26th June 1561. Camden apud Kennet, vol. i. p. 387. Keith, p. 179.

⁶ Neither Keith nor Knox fix the precise date of Moray's arrival at Edinburgh. By a letter of Throckmorton to the Lord James, it appears that he was in London on the 20th May, and at Edinburgh on the 3d June.

⁷ Keith, p. 167.

France, and Elizabeth, judging this a proper conjuncture to make a last effort to procure from Mary the ratification of the treaty of Edinburgh, instructed Throckmorton, her ambassador at Paris, to visit her for this purpose. His request was temperately but decidedly denied. The Scottish queen informed him, that she had now finally resolved to return to her dominions in Scotland, where she would have an opportunity of consulting the estates of her realm, without whose advice it would be improper for her to act in this matter; she added that she had resolved to withdraw all Frenchmen from Scotland; that she regretted their presence had given discontent to her subjects and excited jealousy in her good sister; but that nothing should be left undone to satisfy the Queen of England, from whom she expected the like good offices in return. Throckmorton observed in reply, that it seemed superfluous to delay the ratification of the treaty till she had obtained the advice of her nobles and the estates of the realm, of whose opinion there could be no doubt, as the treaty was made by their consent. "Yea," said Mary, "by some of them, but not by all."¹ It will appear when I come amongst them, whether they be of the same mind that you say they were then of. But of this I assure you, Monsieur l'Am-bassadeur, I for my part am very desirous to have the perfect and the assured amity of the queen my good sister, and I will use all the means I can to give her occasion to think that I mean it indeed." "I answered," says Throckmorton, "Madam, the queen my mistress, you may be assured, will use the like towards you, to move you to be of the same opinion towards her." "Then," said she, "I trust the queen your mistress will not support nor encourage any of my subjects to continue in their disobedience nor take upon them things which appertaineth not to subjects. You know, (quoth she,) there is much ado in my realm about the matters of religion; and though there be a greater

number of a contrary religion to me than I would there were, yet there is no reason that subjects should give a law to their sovereign, and specially in matters of religion, which I fear, (quoth she,) my subjects will take in hand." In reply to this the ambassador adverted to the great changes in religion which had taken place in Scotland, and to the fact that the majority in that kingdom were Protestants. Mary does not appear to have denied this; and, in answer to a remark of Throckmorton, admitted that she had often heard her uncle the cardinal say there was much room for reformation in the discipline of the Church of Rome, but observed, at the same time, that she was none of those who would change their religion every year. "I mean," said she, "to constrain none of my subjects, but would wish that they were all as I am; and I trust they shall have no support to constrain me."²

Mary, as we see from this interview, had resolved to visit her dominions; but although she could thus ably reply to so experienced a diplomatist as Throckmorton, (it was her peculiar misfortune, that she gave her confidence to those who betrayed it to her adversaries.) Amongst these was D'Osell, who enjoyed much credit with her, and had been despatched to solicit a passport from the English queen. He was accompanied by a gentleman,³ who was to bring it to France, whilst he pursued his journey into Scotland to prepare for his mistress's reception. But D'Osell was altogether unworthy of the trust reposed in him; he communicated to Throckmorton, previous to setting out, the intended movements of the queen, and, on being admitted to an audience, disclosed them to Elizabeth, and advised with her how she ought to proceed. She accordingly refused the passport; with much acrimony and violence gave secret orders for the preparation of some ships of war,

¹ Keith, p. 167.

² Original, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Cecil, June 30, 1561.

³ Keith, p. 166.

which, under pretence of scouring the seas for pirates, were to watch for the Scottish queen; and, instead of permitting D'Osell to continue his journey to Scotland, sent him back to Paris to inform Mary of her resolution, and secretly to communicate her intentions to Throckmorton.

This ambassador, in a letter to Cecil, expressed surprise and regret at this change of measures. "I do somewhat marvel," said he, "at this resolution on the Queen of Scotland's demand for a passage; and the rather, that by all former writings and messages it seemed to me that her majesty was of the mind to have the said queen enticed to go from hence, and to be advised by the councillors of her own realm, where, as I take it, many occasions of unquietness and practice might be taken away that her being here might work, both by the heads of such as here she is ruled by, and also by the solicitation of such princes as like to entertain, cumber, and be desirous of her: which to do, neither the one nor the other cannot have such commodity if she were in Scotland. I think also upon that you write, that your friends in Scotland will most allow that resolution; whereat I somewhat muse, seeing the Lord James, at his late being here, wrought what he could, and in the same mind hath continued, to persuade the said queen, his sister, to come home; *and if he be now of another mind, I know not what he meaneth.* But if he persist in his former opinion, then it may be feared that you shall offend more than the Queen of Scotland." Throckmorton next alluded to the idea of intercepting Mary. "Because," said he, "I hear nothing of such as come from thence [England] of any equipage or force by sea in readiness to empesche the Queen of Scotland's passage, or to make that good that Monsieur D'Osell hath reported here her majesty said unto him—which was that her majesty would provide to keep the Queen of Scotland from passing home—I have thought good to say thus much to you, that better it had been if no such

thing had been said, but passage granted, if no provision or show be made to empesche her indeed. . . . And yet I will not advise you to counsel the queen to be at any great cost, inasmuch as the truth and certainty of the queen of Scotland's journey is not known, nor the certain place of her embarking." To this letter this emphatic postscript was added. "If you mind to catch the queen of Scots, your ships must search and see all, for she meaneth rather to steal away than to pass with force."¹

There is another passage, in a letter from Cecil to the Earl of Sussex, which throws a clear light on this refusal of the passport, and establishes the point that Moray and the Protestant party in Scotland were anxious that she should not be permitted to return to her kingdom. "Monsieur D'Osell," says he, "came from the Scots queen, with the request that the queen his mistress might have a safe conduct to pass along our sea-coasts, and himself to pass into Scotland to provide for her coming. Many reasons moved us to mislike her passage, but this only served us for answer, that where she had promised to send the queen's majesty a good answer for the ratification of the last league of peace, made at Edinburgh, and now had sent none, her majesty would not disguise with her, but plainly would forbear to shew her such pleasure until she should ratify it, and that done, she should not only have free passage, but all helps and gratuities. Monsieur D'Osell was also gently required to return with this answer: what will follow we shall shortly see. *This proceeding will like the Scots well.*"²

At this moment the seas were much infested by pirates, and the English queen, who dreaded the expense and the obloquy to which she would be exposed if she openly prepared a fleet to intercept Mary, took advantage of this circumstance to put out to sea

¹ MS. Letter, French Correspondence, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Cecil, Paris, 26th July 1561.

² British Museum, MS. Letter, Cecil to Sussex. Titus, book xiii. 42, dorso. Dated, Newhall, 25th July 1561.

some ships of war, with the avowed object of protecting her merchants, but with secret instructions to be on the watch for the Scottish queen, and not to suffer her to pass.¹

The refusal of a passport by Elizabeth deeply wounded Mary; but although she dreaded the hostile intentions of that queen, her preparations were now so far advanced, that she determined they should not be countermanded. On the 26th July, she gave a final audience to the English ambassador, and of this interview we have fortunately a minute and interesting account, transmitted by Throckmorton to his royal mistress. It is impossible to read it without forming a favourable idea of the prudence, dignity, and spirit of the young Queen of Scotland. When the ambassador was introduced, she commanded all the audience to retire. "I know not well," said she, "my own infirmity, nor how far I may with my passion be transported, but I like not to have so many witnesses of my passions as the queen your mistress was content to have when she talked with Monsieur D'Osell." She then continued, "There is nothing, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, doth more grieve me, than that I did so forget myself, as to require of the queen your mistress that favour which I had no need to ask. I needed no more to have made her privy to my journey than she doth me of hers. I may pass well enough home into mine own realm, I think, without her passport or licence; for though the late king your master used all the impeachment he could, both to stay me and catch me when I came hither, yet you know, Monsieur

l'Ambassadeur, I came hither safely; and I may have as good means to help me home again as I had to come hither, if I would employ my friends. Truly, I was so far from evil meaning to the queen your mistress, that at this time I was more willing to employ her amity to stand me in stead than all the friends I have; and yet you know, both in this realm and elsewhere, I have both friends and allies, and such as would be glad and willing to employ their forces and aid to stand me in stead. You have oftentimes told me, that the amity between the queen your mistress and me, was very necessary and profitable for us both; and now I have some reason to think, that the queen your mistress is not of that mind; for I am sure, if she were, she would not have refused me thus unkindly. It seemeth she maketh more account of the amity of my disobedient subjects than she doth of me their sovereign, who am her equal in degree though inferior in wisdom and experience, her nighest kinswoman and her next neighbour Indeed," continued the queen, with great animation, "your mistress doth give me cause to seek friendship where I did not mind to ask it. But Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, let your mistress think that it will be deemed very strange amongst all princes and countries, that she should first animate my subjects against me, and now, being a widow, impeach my going into my own country. I ask of her nothing but friendship; I do not trouble her state, nor practise with her subjects. And yet I know there be in her realm some that be inclined enough to hear offers. I know also they be not of the same mind she is of, neither in religion nor in other things. The queen your mistress doth say that I am young, and do lack experience: but I have age enough and experience to behave myself towards my friends and kinsfolks friendly and uprightly; and I trust my discretion shall not so fail me, that my passion shall move me to use other language of her than is due to a queen and my next kinswoman."

¹ This important fact seems to me to be established by a letter which Cecil addressed to Sussex. "The Scottish queen," says he, "was the 10th of this month at Bulloign, and meaneth to take shipping at Calais. Neither they in Scotland, nor we here, do like her going home. The queen's majesty hath three ships in the North Seas to preserve the fishers from pirates. *I think they will be sorry to see her pass.* MS. Letter, Cecil to Sussex, Smallbridge, Mr Smallgrave's house, the 12th of August 1561. British Museum, Titus, book xiii. 44, dorso. Keith, p. 178.

Nothing could be more dignified, yet nothing more severe than this remonstrance of Mary; and the manner in which she glanced at the violence into which Elizabeth had been betrayed in her interview with D'Osell, could not fail to touch this proud princess to the quick. Throckmorton, in reply, excused the conduct of the English queen, and fell back upon the old topics of complaint, the assumption of the arms and title of England, and the delay to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh. On both points Mary was prepared to answer him. "You know," said she, "that when I assumed the style and arms of England, I was under the commandment of King Henry my father, and of the king my lord and husband: whatsoever was then done, was their act, not mine; and since their death, I have neither borne the arms nor used the title of England." With regard to the treaty, upon which so much has been said, she contended, that without the advice of the council of her realm, it was impossible she could come to a decision on so grave a matter, which required the mature deliberation of the wisest amongst them. "This," said she, "I cannot have, until I return to my dominions; I am about to hasten me home, as fast as I may, to the intent the matters may be answered: and now the queen your mistress will in no wise suffer me neither to pass home, nor him that I sent into my realm, so as, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, it seemeth the queen your mistress will be the cause why in this matter she is not satisfied, or else she will not be satisfied, but liketh to make this matter a quarrel still betwixt us, whereof she is the author."¹

On the 21st of July, Throckmorton took leave of Mary, regretting that the terms upon which she then stood with regard to the English queen did not permit him to wait upon her at her embarkation. Her reply was affecting, and seemed almost to shadow forth her future fate. "If," said she, "my preparations were not so much

¹ Keith, pp. 174, 175.

advanced as they are, peradventure the queen your mistress's unkindness might stay my voyage; but now I am determined to adventure the matter, whatsoever come of it. I trust the wind will be so favourable as I shall not need to come on the coast of England; and if I do, then, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, the queen, your mistress, shall have me in her hands to do her will of me; and if she be so hard-hearted as to desire my end, she may then do her pleasure, and make sacrifice of me: peradventure that casualty might be better for me than to live: in this matter God's will be fulfilled."²

These melancholy forebodings were not, however, at this moment destined to be realized. Mary, having left Paris on the 21st of July, was accompanied as far as St Germain by the King of France, the queen-mother, the King of Navarre, and other persons of the first rank. Here, after a few days' stay, she bade adieu to the royal family; and, attended by the Duke of Guise, the Cardinals of Lorraine and Guise, the Grand Prior, who was general of the French galleys, and other noble persons, she proceeded to Calais, where, after waiting some time for a fair wind, she embarked on the 14th of August.³ All that day she ceased not to direct her eyes toward the shore of France, until her view was intercepted by night. She then commanded a couch to be spread for her on deck, and gave injunctions that she should be awakened at sunrise if the land were still in view. It happened that there was a calm during the night, the ships made little way, and in the morning, the French coast was still discernible.⁴ The queen sat up in bed, and straining her eyes till the shore faded from her sight, pathetically bade adieu to the beautiful country where she had passed her happiest years. "Farewell, France," said she, "beloved France, I shall never see thee more!" Soon after this, a favour-

² Keith, p. 176.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Paris, 19th August 1561, Throckmorton to the Council.

⁴ Brantome, vol. ii. p. 326.

able wind sprung up, accompanied by a fog, under cover of which the queen's galleys escaped the English ships, and arrived in the port of Leith on the 19th of August 1561. One vessel, however, in which was the Earl of Eglinton, was captured by Elizabeth's

cruisers, and carried into port; but as soon as it was discovered that the young queen was not on board, the prize was released, and pursued her voyage into Scotland. The incident, however, demonstrated clearly the sinister intentions of the English queen.

CHAPTER VI.

MARY.

1561—1565.

ON her arrival in her dominions, Mary was received with great joy by all classes of her subjects, and for a while those unhappy feelings which exasperated the various factions of the state against each other, were softened down and forgotten in the general enthusiasm.¹ She was conducted by her nobility with rude state from Leith to her palace of Holyrood. The pomp of the procession, if we may believe Brantome, an eye-witness, was far inferior to the brilliant pageants to which she had been accustomed. She could not repress a sigh when she beheld the sorry palfreys prepared for herself and her ladies; and when awakened on the morning after her arrival, by the citizens singing psalms under her window, the unwonted strains seemed dissonant to courtly ears. But the welcome, though singular, was sincere; the people were delighted with their young queen; her extreme beauty, and the gracefulness of her manners, created a strong prepossession in her favour; her subjects crowded round her with expressions of unfeigned devotedness, and for a time she believed that her forebodings of difficulties and distresses were unfounded.²

Within a few days after her return, however, the celebration of mass in her private chapel occasioned a tumult, which was with difficulty appeased. Mary had stipulated for the free exercise of her own form of worship, and the Lord James, previous to his departure for France, maintained, in opposition to Knox and the strictest reformers, that this liberty could not possibly be denied to their sovereign. Here the matter rested till the queen's arrival; but the more intolerant of the Protestants had early made up their minds to resist by force every attempt to raise the "Idol," as they termed the mass, once more in the land. They drew no distinction between the idolatry of the Jews, which was punished by death, and the alleged idolatry of the adherents of the creed of Rome: both were in their eyes maintainers of the accursed thing which was hateful to God. It was even argued by Knox, that the Jews were more tolerable in their tenets than the Romish Church: he would rather see, he said, ten thousand French soldiers landed in Scotland, than suffer a single mass. And when the Master

arrived unexpectedly early in the morning of the 19th August; and the weather was so dark and stormy, that the ships were not seen for the fog. This circumstance must have interrupted the preparations.

¹ Instructions to Lethington, sent Ambassador to England. Keith, p. 185.

² Brantome, vol. ii. pp. 123, 124. Mary

of Lindsay, a furious zealot, heard that it was about to be celebrated, he buckled on his harness, assembled his followers, and rushing into the court of the palace, shouted aloud that the priests should die the death. The Lord James, however, opposed this violence, placed himself at the door of the chapel, overawed the multitude, and preserved the lives of the chaplains who officiated, for which he was bitterly and ironically attacked by Knox.¹

The queen, although she claimed for herself the toleration which she extended to her subjects, was anxious to prevent any misconception of her intentions with regard to religion. It had been declared in council that no alterations should be made, and she now published a proclamation, in which she assured her subjects of her determination to maintain the Protestant form of worship, which she found established at her arrival, and added, that no one should be permitted, under pain of death, to attempt, either publicly or privately, any innovation upon the national faith.² Nor was this all: although Knox's sincere, but ill-advised zeal, had done much to excite her opposition, the queen, to the astonishment of her own party, desired to have an interview with the Reformer, who has himself left us an account of their conversation. She blamed him for the violence of his book against female government, and with a clearness and vigour of argument, for which he was probably not prepared, pointed out its evil consequences, in exciting subjects against their rulers. She then advised him to treat with greater charity those who differed from him in opinion. "If, madam," said he, "to rebuke idolatry, and to persuade the people to worship God according to His Word, be to raise subjects against their princes, I cannot stand excused, for so have I acted; but if the true knowledge of God and

His right worshipping lead all good subjects (as they assuredly do) to obey the prince from their heart, then who can reprehend me?" As for his book, he allowed it was directed against female government, but excused its principles as being more matters of opinion than of conscience, and professed his willingness to live in all contentment under her majesty's government, as long as she kept her hands undefiled by the blood of the saints of God. He contended, that in religion subjects were bound to follow, not the will of their prince, but the commands of their Creator. "If," said he, "all men in the days of the apostles should have been compelled to follow the religion of the Roman emperors, where would have been the Christian faith? Daniel and his fellows were subjects to Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, and yet they refused to be of their religion."—"But," interrupted the queen, "these men did not resist."—"And yet," replied Knox, "they who obey not the commandment may virtually be said to resist."—"Nay," rejoined Mary, "they did not resist with the sword."—"That," said Knox, "was simply because they had not the power."—"What," cried the queen, starting and speaking with great energy, "do you maintain that subjects, having power, may resist their princes?"—"Most assuredly," continued the Reformer, "if princes exceed their bounds. God hath nowhere commanded higher reverence to be given to kings by their subjects than to parents by their children; and yet, if a father or mother be struck with madness, and attempt to slay his children, they may lawfully bind and disarm him till the frenzy be overpast. It is even so, madam," continued this stern champion of resistance, fixing his eyes upon the young queen, and raising his voice to a tone which almost amounted to a menace, "it is even so with princes that would murder the children of God, who may be their subjects. Their blind zeal is nothing but a mad frenzy, and therefore, to take the sword from them, to

¹ Knox's History of the Reformation, p. 306.

² Knox, p. 307. Corroborated by a Letter of Randolph's to Cecil, 3d June, 1563.—Keith, p. 239.

bind their hands, and to cast them into prison, till they be brought to a more sober mind, is no disobedience against princes, but just obedience, because it agreeth with the Word of God." At these words Mary stood for some time silent and amazed—she was terrified by the violence with which they were uttered. She thought of her own youth and weakness; of the fierce zealots by whom she was surrounded; her mind pictured to itself, in gloomy anticipation, the struggles which awaited her, and she burst into tears. On being comforted and soothed by Moray, who alone was present at the interview, she at length collected herself, and said, turning to Knox, "Well then, I perceive that my subjects shall only obey you, and not me; they must do what they list, not what I command; whilst I must learn to be subject unto them, and not they to me."—"God forbid," said the Reformer, "that it should ever be so; far be it from me to command any, or to absolve subjects from their lawful obedience. My only desire is, that both princes and subjects should obey God, who has in His Word enjoined kings to be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to His Church."—"Yea," quoth Mary, "this is indeed true; but yours is not the Church that I will nourish. I will defend the Church of Rome, for I think it the true Church of God." At this strong assertion of her belief, the indignation of Knox flamed fierce and high. "Your will," said he, "madam, is no reason; neither doth your thought make that Roman harlot to be the immaculate spouse of Christ. And wonder not, madam, that I call Rome an harlot, for that Church is altogether polluted with every kind of spiritual abomination, as well in doctrine as in manners. Yea, madam, I offer myself to prove, that the Church of the Jews who crucified Jesus Christ, when they manifestly denied the Son of God, was not so far degenerated from the ordinances and statutes which God gave by Moses and Aaron unto His people, as the Church of Rome is declined, and for more than five hundred years hath

declined, from that purity of religion which the apostles taught and planted."—"My conscience," said Mary, "is not so."—"Conscience," said Knox, "requires knowledge; and I fear of right knowledge you have but little." After some farther exhortations, the Reformer exposed the idolatry of the mass, and threw down his defiance to the most learned Papists in Europe, declaring his earnest wish that he might have an opportunity of engaging with them in controversy before the queen herself. "In that wish," said Mary, "you may, perhaps, be indulged sooner than you expect." She was then called to dinner; and Knox, on taking his leave, prayed that she might be blessed in the commonwealth of Scotland, as richly as ever was Deborah in the commonwealth of Israel.¹

I have given this interview at some length, and almost in the words of the Reformer, because in the determined and sincere resolution of the queen, that she would support the ancient faith and Church of her fathers, and in the conscientious and violent declaration of Knox, that all such efforts would be met by open resistance, (as far as he had influence,) the causes of the collision which was about to take place are clearly brought out. Alluding to the conferences between Mary and Knox, Lethington, in a letter to Cecil, did justice to the gentleness of the queen, and contrasted it with the harshness of her opponent. "You know," said he, "the vehemency of Mr Knox's spirit, which cannot be bridled, and yet doth sometimes utter such sentences as cannot easily be digested by a weak stomach. I could wish he would deal with her more gently, being a young princess unpersuaded. For this I am accounted too politic; but surely in her comporting with him, she doth declare a wisdom far exceeding her age. God grant her the assistance of His Spirit: surely I see in her a good towardness, and think that the queen your sovereign shall be able to do much with her in religion, if they once enter into a good

¹ Knox, History, p. 211-315, inclusive.

familiarity."¹ That they might enter into this familiarity was now the great object of Mary and her ministers. Elizabeth had congratulated her on her happy return to her dominions, and she soon after (1st September 1561) despatched Lethington, her chief secretary, on a mission to England, to express her earnest wishes for the continuance of peace.²

Not long after, she took a triumphant progress from her palace to the castle of Edinburgh. Five black slaves, magnificently appareled, received her at the west gate of the city;³ twelve of the chief citizens bore a canopy, under which she rode in state; and a public banquet was given to the queen and the noble strangers by whom she was accompanied. The pageants exhibited on this occasion, marked, indeed, the character of the times. An interlude was performed, in which Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were destroyed as they offered strange fire upon the altar; and it required the interference of Huntly to prevent an indecent parody of the mass, in which the effigy of a priest was to have been burnt as he elevated the host. To the zealous burghers these dramas contained a wholesome signification of God's vengeance against idolaters; to others, as sincere but less fanatical, they appeared unwise incitements to persecution; by those against whom they were directed, although not unnoticed, they were passed over in silence.⁴

It was the anxious desire of the queen to give her kingdom time to recover the effects of the war and anarchy to which it had been so long exposed. She had determined, before leaving France, to make every sacrifice to conciliate Elizabeth; nor was this resolution adopted without a great end in view. Her title to the throne of England was still present to her mind. Her claim to the crown, and

her assumption of the arms of this kingdom, had, as we have seen, been injudiciously published by her uncles, when she was still queen of France. Mary had, indeed, apologised for such conduct, and transferred the blame of so strange and premature a measure to her advisers, the Guises; but it was still her earnest desire to have her title to the crown of England recognised by that princess, should she persevere in her vows of celibacy; and, as the surest means to obtain this object, she committed the chief management of her affairs to Moray and Lethington, the great leaders of the Protestant party. Lethington had proposed this scheme to Cecil soon after the death of the French king, and when, anticipating the return of Mary to her dominions, he felt all the peril of his own situation: should he be able to carry this point for the Scottish queen, he knew he was safe; if he failed—if she broke with Elizabeth, and threw herself into the interest of France—he looked upon it as certain ruin "I made you," says he, in a letter to Cecil, "some overture at London, how to salve all matters. I wrote to you more amply in it from Sir Ralph Sadler's house. I would be glad to understand what you think in it, or how the queen's majesty can like of it, and how it shall be followed. I know the queen my sovereign is so informed against me, that unless I be able to do her some service, I cannot long be suffered to live in her realm; and I will never press to continue in service longer than the amity betwixt both realms shall continue."⁵ Lethington was no doubt perfectly sincere in his desire to carry this point in favour of his mistress; and it is remarkable that about six months after he had written to Cecil, and shortly previous to Mary's arrival in Scotland, the Lord James had addressed a letter to the Queen of England on the same delicate subject. In this epistle, which is ably and powerfully written, he congratulated this princess that the ancient enmity between the two nations had been

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 25th October, 1561.

² Keith, p. 185. Stevenson's Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary, p. 90, Mary to Elizabeth, Sept. 1561.

³ Keith, p. 189.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 6th Feb. 1560 1.

miraculously converted into reciprocal attachment, and expressed his earnest desire that the members being thus amicably disposed, the heads (meaning Elizabeth and Mary) should be as heartily joined in love. "You are tender cousins," said he, "both queens, in the flower of your ages, much resembling each other in excellent and goodly qualities, on whom God hath bestowed most liberally the gifts of nature and of fortune, whose sex will not permit that you should advance your glory by wars and bloodshed, but that the chief glory of both should stand in a peaceable reign." The only point which had occasioned dissension between them was, he goes on to observe, the premature discussion of his mistress's title. "I wish to God," said he, "my sovereign lady had never, by any advice, taken in head to pretend interest, or claim any title to your majesty's realm, for then I am fully persuadad you should have been and continued as dear friends as you be tender cousins; but now, since on her part something hath been thought of it, and first motioned when the two realms were in war together, your majesty knoweth, I fear, that unless that root may be removed, it shall ever breed unkindness between you. Your majesty cannot yield; and she may on the other part think it hard, being so nigh of the blood of England, so to be made a stranger from it." The Lord James then ventures on the dangerous ground of the succession. "If," says he, "any midway could be picked out to remove this difference to both your contentments, then it is like we should have a perpetual quietness. I have long thought of it, and never durst communicate it to the queen my sovereign, nor many of my countrymen, nor yet will hereafter follow it farther than shall seem good to your majesty. The matter is higher than my capacity is able to compass, yet upon my simple overture your highness can lay a larger foundation. What inconvenience were it, if your majesty's title did remain untouched, as well for yourself as the issue of your body, to provide that to the queen my

sovereign her own place were reserved in the succession to the crown of England, which your majesty will pardon me if I take to be next, by the law of all nations, as she that is next in lawful descent of the right line of King Henry the Seventh, your grandfather; and in the meantime this isle to be united in a perpetual friendship? The succession of realms cometh by God's appointment, according to His good pleasure, and no provision of man can alter that which He hath determined, but it must needs come to pass; yet is there appearance, that without injury of any party, this accord might breed us great quietness. Everything must have some beginning. If I may receive answer from your majesty, that you will allow of any such agreement, I will travail with the queen my sovereign, to do what I can to bring her to some conformity. If your majesty dislike it, I will not farther meddle therewith."¹

This sensible letter its author enclosed to Cecil, directing him to advise on it, and present it, or withdraw it, as he judged best. Whether it ever reached the queen's eye is uncertain; and as the Scottish baron had fearlessly ventured on ground which the more wary Cecil scarcely dared to tread, it is probable he did not risk its delivery; but it proves that the Lord James was sincerely attached on this subject to the interests of his sister the queen. It is worthy of remark, also, that in this grand design, we are furnished with the key to the policy adopted by Mary during the first years of her government. Thus, the same reasons which induced her to favour the Protestants led her to depress the Romanist party, at the head of whom was Huntly, one of the most powerful, crafty, and unscrupulous men in the country, against whom the Lord James placed himself in mortal opposition.²

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, 6th August 1561, the Lord James to Queen Elizabeth.

² Soon after the queen's arrival, Randolph informed Cecil that Huntly and this potent baron greatly discorded. Some alleged that the cause of the quarrel was a boast of Huntly,

It was not to be expected that the bishops and the Catholic peers should bear this with equanimity,—they had suffered severely in the cause of the queen; they naturally looked to her return as the season when their fidelity was to be rewarded; and their feelings were proportionally bitter when they found themselves treated with neglect, and saw those who had been lately stigmatised as traitors, advanced to the chief offices in the state.¹ They accordingly recommenced their intrigues with the Guises; but these crafty diplomats would not commit themselves too deeply—it was their present policy to temporise. In an overture to Throckmorton, the English ambassador, the Duke of Guise repeated the proposal of the Lord James, that Elizabeth should declare Mary her successor.² It was their object at the same time to procure the renewal of the league with France, and the co-operation of the queen their niece in their vast and unprincipled schemes; and if they failed—if Mary declined their great offers, and refused to “hang her keys at their girdle,” they had resolved to form a faction against her, at the head of which should be Chastelherault, Arran, Huntly, and Hume.³

Without appearing to notice the plots of the Romanists with France, Mary steadily followed out her design of conciliating the Protestants, and obtaining the friendship of England. She appointed a council of twelve, of

that if the queen commanded him, he could set up the mass in three shires; to which the other answered that it was past his power to do so, and so he should find the first moment he attempted it. Keith, p. 190.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 15th Jan. 1561-2. “I thank you for your good advice towards our Papists, which hath been as yet mostly followed; and I trust since the queen’s arrival they have obtained no great advantage, but, to be plain with you, be in worse case a great deal than before.”

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 8th October 1561.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 13th December 1561. *Ibid.*, same to Cecil, 5th Dec. 1561.

whom seven were reformers,⁴ and she continued to follow the advice of her brother, the Lord James, on all important subjects, and sent him at the head of a large force, and armed with almost absolute power, to reduce the Borders to obedience.⁵ To Randolph, whom Elizabeth appointed her resident at the Scottish court, she behaved with the utmost courtesy; and a correspondence by letters was begun between the princesses, in which all was peace, amity, and playful affection. In his mission to the English court, Lethington urged upon Elizabeth the necessity of declaring Mary her successor. His public instructions, indeed, did not authorise him to enter upon this delicate subject, which has led Keith to question whether it was now broached at all; but we know from Throckmorton’s letters, not only that the proposal was made, but that Cecil was much embarrassed by it. “For the matter,” says he, “lately proposed to her majesty by the Laird of Ledington, in which to deal one way or other you find difficulties, even so do I think, that not to deal in it at all no manner of way, is more dangerous, as well for the queen’s majesty as for the realm, and especially if God should deal so unmercifully with us as to take the queen from us without issue; which God forbid, considering the terms the state standeth in presently.”⁶ For the moment Elizabeth evaded the point by despatching Sir Peter Mewtas to Scotland, with a request that Mary should confirm the treaty of Edinburgh, a proposal which she well knew the Scottish queen must decline.⁷

Meanwhile, the Lord James exhibited an example of prompt and severe justice upon the Borders. Proceeding to Jedburgh and Dumfries, with an army which rendered opposition useless, he pursued the thieves into their

⁴ Spottiswood, p. 179.

⁵ 8th November 1561. MS. Letter, Lord James to Cecil, State-paper Office.

⁶ MS. Letter, French Correspondence, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Cecil, 9th Oct. 1561.

⁷ Treasurer’s Accounts, 19th October 1561. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 935.

strongholds, razed their towers to the ground, hanged twenty of the most notorious offenders, sent fifty more in chains to Edinburgh, and in a meeting with the English wardens, Lord Grey and Sir John Forster, restored order and good government to the marches.¹

During his absence, the Romish clergy resorted to court, but found a colder reception than they anticipated; and although Mons. de Moret, who had been sent from the Duke of Savoy, endeavoured to influence the queen in favour of the Romanists, his power was either very slight,² or it suited the tortuous politics of the Guises to encourage at this moment the amity between Mary and Elizabeth. In speaking of an intended interview between the princesses, the proposal of which had come from Mary, Lethington assured Cecil, that France earnestly desired it;³ and so far did they carry this real or pretended feeling, that it was affirmed by the Lord St Colm, lately arrived from that country, that the Cardinal of Lorraine, in his anxiety to promote the amity between the kingdoms, and to secure to his niece the succession to the English throne, had persuaded her to become a Protestant.⁴ To these feelings it is probable we are to ascribe the severe measures against the Roman Catholic clergy, which were adopted at this time in the General Assembly of the Church held in the capital: as the subject is important, it is necessary to treat it with some detail.

Notwithstanding the full establishment of the Reformation, the Protestant ministers were in a state of extreme poverty, and dependent upon the precarious assistance of their flocks; whilst the revenues of the Church were divided between the nobles, who had appropriated them, and the Romish prelates, who still re-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord James to Cecil, 8th Nov. 1561. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 936; also Randolph to Cecil, 7th Dec. 1561. Keith, p. 205.

² Randolph to Cecil, 17th December 1561. Keith, p. 209.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 29th January 1561-2.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 30th January 1561-2.

tained part of their ancient wealth. On the meeting of the General Assembly, the ministers determined to use their most strenuous efforts to procure some support out of the ecclesiastical revenues; yet the attempt was resisted by many of the barons who had been zealous supporters of the Reformation, but loved its plunder better than its principles. The rulers of the court began, as Knox says, to draw themselves apart from the society of their brethren, and to fret and grudge.⁵ Lethington, learned, acute, and worldly, openly scoffed; and Knox, who dreaded his powers of argument, as much as he suspected his sincerity, attacked him with bitterness. Wood, too, the secretary of the Lord James, the chief adviser of the queen, joined the opponents of the ministers; it was even debated whether the General Assembly, being held without the presence or authority of the queen, was a lawful or constitutional convention. The barons, who had been accustomed to take a part in its proceedings, separated from their brethren; and although, after a violent discussion, they reluctantly concurred in its legality, yet they steadily refused to pass the Book of Discipline, and thwarted, though they did not openly oppose, the measures for the provision of the clergy. After some consultation, however, an act was passed ordaining the annual revenues of the whole benefices in the realm to be calculated, and out of this gross sum, the Catholic clergy consented to give a third to the queen, being permitted to retain two-thirds for themselves. This third was to be applied to the maintenance of preachers, the endowment of schools, the support of the poor, and the increase of the revenue of the crown.⁶

Before this proposal was made, the funds of the Church, previously immense, had been greatly dilapidated. On the overthrow of Popery, the bishops and other dignified clergy had entered into transactions with their friends or kinsmen, by which large portions of ecclesiastical property

⁵ Knox, p. 318.

⁶ Knox, p. 321-324, inclusive.

passed into private hands; in some cases, sales had been made by the ancient incumbents, or leases had been purchased by strangers, which the pope, zealous to protect his persecuted children, had confirmed; the crown, too, had appointed laymen to be factors or administrators of bishoprics and livings: so that, by these various methods, the property of the Church was so much diffused and curtailed, that the third of all the money collected fell far below the sum necessary to give an adequate support to the clergy. There was much fraud also practised in making up the returns. Many of the Catholic clergy evaded the production of their rentals, some gave in false estimates; and although the persons appointed to fix the rate of provision had been the firm supporters of the Reformation, though the Lord James and Maitland of Lethington, with Argyle and Morton, superintended every step, the result disappointed the expectations of the ministers. It was asserted, that the only effect of the change was, to secure a large share for the lay proprietors of church lands, to transfer a considerable portion to the crown, and to leave a wretched pittance to the ministers. Yet, when fairly viewed, the change was certainly creditable to the queen, and involved a concession which ought to have been considered valuable and important. (It was a legal recognition of the right of the Presbyterian ministers to be supported by the state, and ought to have convinced all gainsayers that Mary, though she insisted on her private mass, considered the reformed religion as the established faith of the country.) This was no little matter, yet no party was pleased. Knox and the ministers were discontented, not only that they received so little, but because in the same assembly the mass was permitted, and the Book of Discipline refused: the Roman Catholic party were still louder in their complaints, and declared, that nothing now was wanting, but an interview between Mary and Elizabeth, to the utter overthrow of the ancient faith. Cecil, whilst he

rejoiced that the bishops were spoiled, lamented that their riches should, even in part, have fallen to the crown; and the satirical vein of Randolph ascribed all to the worst motives. "Where your honour," says he, addressing Cecil, "liketh better the diminution of the bishops and other livings, than the augmentation of the crown therewith, what can I better say than that which I find written. 'Merx meritricis, et ad meretrices reversa est.' I find it neither done for zeal to Christ's religion, nor hatred to the viciousness of their lives that had it. If she did it for need, they themselves, to have enjoyed the whole, offered much more; I find not also, that all other men, besides the queen, are pleased with this: the duke beginneth now to grieve—he must depart from seven parts of Arbroath; the Bishop of St Andrews from as much of his livings; the Lord Claud, the Duke's son, in England, future successor to Paisley, also the seventh: the Abbot of Kilwinning, as much, besides divers others of that race; so that many a Hamilton shall shortly be turned a begging. . . . I know not whether this be able to make the duke a Papist again, for now 'conferunt consilia;' the bishop and he."¹

Cecil had earnestly advised Lethington to encourage a meeting between the two queens;² and although the Scottish secretary felt the danger of negotiating in such a case, observing, that if anything should frame amiss, it would be his utter ruin,³ the ardent feelings of Mary relieved him of the difficulty, by herself proposing the interview in a letter which she addressed to Elizabeth.⁴ France, also, and the cardinal her uncle, encouraged the overture; and even Randolph, whose judgment when in favour with Mary, none can suspect of bias, expressed his opinion of the sincerity, upright dealing, and affection of that prin-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 15th January 1561-2.

² Ibid., 15th January 1561-2.

³ Ibid.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, January 29, 1561-2.

cess.¹ Early in the spring (May 23, 1562) her anxiety upon this subject induced her to despatch Secretary Lethington to the English court, that he might arrange the preliminaries; and the Lord James, her chief minister, who had lately, upon the occasion of his marriage, received from the queen the earldom of Mar, requested leave, when the meeting took place, to bring Christopher Goodman along with him, as the minister of the Protestants, describing him as the most temperate and modest of the learned;² and Randolph, in a letter to Elizabeth, alluded in emphatic terms to the anxiety for the interview, expressed by the more wise and moderate amongst the Protestants, and the happy effects they anticipated from it. "The hope," said he, "which they have, that your majesty shall be the instrument to convert their sovereign to Christ, and the knowledge of His true Word, causeth them to wish, above measure, that your majesties may see the one the other."³

It is a mortifying but an instructive fact that Knox, and the more violent portion of the reformers, in a conscientious but narrow spirit opposed the meeting with bitterness, and attacked it in the pulpit. They regarded the Prelacy of England as little better than the Popery of Rome, and preferred that their queen should remain an obstinate Papist, rather than take refuge in a religion which had as little ground in the Word of God. "Our Papists," said Randolph, addressing Cecil, "greatly mistrust the meeting; our Protestants as greatly desire it; our preachers, to be plain with your honour, at one word, be more vehement than discreet or learned, which I heartily lament. The little bruit that hath been here of late, that this queen is advised by the cardinal to embrace the religion of England, maketh them now almost wild, of the

which they both say and preach, that it is little better than when it was at the worst: I have not so amply conferred with Mr Knox in these matters as shortly I must, who upon Sunday last gave the cross and the candle such a wipre, that as wise and learned as himself wished him to have held his peace. He recompensed the same with a marvellous vehement and piercing prayer, in the end of his sermon, for the continuance of amity and hearty love with England."⁴

In the midst of these negotiations and heartburnings the Earl of Arran, eldest son to the Duke of Chastelherault, went suddenly mad; and in his frenzy accused himself, his father, and the Earl of Bothwell, of a conspiracy to seize the person of the queen, murder the Lord James, (Earl of Mar,) and possess themselves of the government.⁵ The violence of this unhappy nobleman, and the deep mortification with which he beheld the chief power intrusted to the Lord James, had already occasioned much disquiet to the queen, and it was reported shortly after her arrival from France, that he meant to attack the palace and carry her off. This disposed people to give some credit to the present conspiracy. It was observed that Arran shewed no symptoms of insanity when he first discovered the enterprise; and the profligate character of Bothwell confirmed their belief. It was he, as Arran insisted, that had invented the whole plot; which, being imparted to him secretly, he agreed to join in the enterprise, and revealed it to his father the Duke, trusting to have him for an accomplice. At first he explained the intention of the conspirators with great clearness, but soon after his disclosures exhibited signs of derangement: he began to talk of

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 30th January 1561-2.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 26th May 1562.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Scot's Correspondence, Randolph to the Queen, 26th May 1562.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 12th February 1561-2.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 31st March 1562.

devils and enchantments; affirmed that he had been bewitched by the mother of the Lord James, whom he spoke of as a noted sorceress; retracted much of his former story, and became so incoherent, that, for security rather than punishment, he was committed to ward in the castle.¹

His alleged accomplices, Bothwell and the Abbot of Kilwinning, were imprisoned, some things appearing suspicious in their conduct; but to the aged duke, who protested his innocence, and with tears bewailed the ruin of his house, Mary behaved with great tenderness: a passage from a letter of Randolph to Elizabeth is important in the picture it gives of her gentleness, justice, and impartiality, upon this trying occasion. The English queen and Cecil, who knew well the violence with which Arran had opposed himself to the queen, imagined that Mary, in her resentment, might be ready to believe anything against him. Randolph, however, completely refutes this unworthy notion. "For the likelihood," says he, "that the queen is not moved with any evil mind towards the duke or his, besides that which I have heard her grace say, I will only declare unto your majesty that which I myself (having many times had suspicion thereof) have observed and marked. I never saw yet, since her grace's arrival, but she sought more means to win the Duke of Chastelherault's good will, and my Lord of Arran's, than ever they had will to acknowledge their duties as subjects unto their sovereign. She knoweth herself in what place God hath appointed them, and that He is the revenger of all injustice. To separate them from her, being her subjects, there is no cause but disobedience and transgression of her laws. She is not ignorant also of the affection of many in this realm towards that house, how many they are, and how they are allied, wherein to attempt anything against them unjustly, or

that should not be manifest unto the world what their fault were, it should be her own ruin. These things, an't like your majesty, are no small stays to the appetite of man's will, and much more unto hers, being a woman, lately returned into a country where never yet such obedience hath been given unto the prince or princess as is due unto them. In token also that no such thing was meant of her part, it appeared in nothing more than in the usage of his father, of himself, and their friends, with all gentleness, the more to let them know, and the world judge, that she did love them as her kinsmen, esteemed them as her successors, (if God gave her no issue,) and favoured them as her subjects, if their doings do not merit the contrary. Unto the one, not long since, she promised a reasonable support towards his living, for the time of his father's life; and remitted unto the other many things that, both by law and conscience, he was in danger for both body and goods. After the detection of this crime, the queen's grace so well conceived of my Lord of Arran, and judged so well of his sincere meaning towards her, that she devised with her council what yearly sum, either of money or other thing, she might bestow upon him. What grief this is unto her heart, it hath appeared in many ways, and she hath wished that it could be known unto your majesty, without whose advice, I believe, she will not hastily determine anything against either the one or the other. Of these things," concludes Randolph, "because the whole country doth bear witness, my testimony needeth the less."²

Everything, indeed, at this time, in the conduct of the Scottish queen, evinced her sincere attachment to England; and her desire, not only to suppress every intrigue which might disturb the tranquillity of her own kingdom, but where these plots originated, as they sometimes did, with the English Papists, to assist Elizabeth in their detection and punishment.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 7th April 1562. Same to same 9th April 1562.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Elizabeth, 9th April 1562.

This was clearly shewn at the present moment; for the English queen, having discovered some suspicious intercourse between the Earl of Lennox and the Romish faction, believed it to be a plot for the marriage of the Scottish queen with Lord Darnley; and suddenly committed Lennox and his Countess Lady Margaret, the niece of Henry the Eighth, to the Tower. On being informed of it, Mary approved of the severity, derided the practices of Lennox, and declared her resolution never to unite herself with any of that race.¹) About the same time, the Bishop of St Andrews and the Earl of Eglington having disobeyed the laws regarding the re-establishment of the mass, a royal proclamation was set forth, denouncing death against all who bore a part in this idolatrous solemnity, or countenanced it by their presence,² reserving only the queen's mass in her palace.

To the Lord James her brother, of whose warm attachment to the English interest we have already met with many proofs, the Scottish queen extended so much favour, that his influence became the chief channel to success at court. On his marriage to the daughter of the Earl Marshal, she created him Earl of Mar, and gave a banquet, the splendour of which, with the pageants and masking, called forth the reproof of the more zealous part of the ministers.³ "At this notable marriage," says Randolph to Cecil, "one thing there was which I must testify with my own hand, which is, that upon Shrove-Tuesday, at night, sitting among the lords at supper in sight of the queen, and placed for that purpose, she drank unto the queen's majesty, and sent me the cup of gold, which weigheth eighteen or twenty ounces. After supper, in giving her majesty thanks, she uttered, in many affectionate words, her desire of amity and perpetual kindness with the queen, and returned and talked long with me

thereof, in the hearing of the duke and the Earl of Huntly."⁴

During the absence of Lethington at the English court, the tumults upon the Borders again demanded the prompt interference of the government. Murder, robbery, and offences of all kinds, prevailed to an intolerable degree; and men who had been publicly outlawed, walked abroad, deriding the terrors of justice. Of these crimes, the great centre was Hawick; and the queen, who was determined to make an example, armed the Earl of Mar with full powers against the offenders. Nor was his success less than on his former expedition. Making a sudden and rapid march, he encompassed the town with his soldiers, entered the market-place, and by proclamation forbade any citizen, on pain of death, to receive or shelter a thief. Fifty-three of the most noted outlaws were apprehended, of these eighteen were instantly drowned "for lack of trees and halters." Six were hanged at Edinburgh, and the rest either acquitted or imprisoned in the castle. By this memorable example of severity, the disturbed districts were reduced to sudden and extraordinary quietness, whilst the courage and success of Mar contributed to raise him still higher than before in the favour of his sovereign.⁵

Mary had already declined many royal offers of marriage, and aware that any alliance which she made must be an object of deep and jealous interest to Elizabeth, she was anxious to have the approval and advice of that princess. It was this feeling, probably, which induced her to receive with caution, though with her accustomed courtesy, the ambassador of the king of Sweden, who, about this time (June 3, 1562) arrived on a matrimonial mission in Scotland. He brought with him a whole-length portrait of his master, which he delivered to one of the Marys,⁶ to be

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 31st March 1562.

² Ibid., 3d June 1562.

³ Knox, p. 327.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 12th February, 1561-2.

⁵ Ibid., 8th July 1562.

⁶ See supra, p. 68.

presented to the queen, who hung it up in her private cabinet, and dismissed him with letters and a safe-conduct for the Swedish monarch and his navy to land within any port of her realm which they might find most convenient.¹ This prince had already made proposals to Elizabeth, which were coldly received; but Mary was aware of the jealousy of her nature, and the danger of appearing to interfere with her admirers, and she now looked anxiously for the return of Lethington.

At length this minister arrived with the welcome intelligence that the English queen had consented to the interview. She sent her picture, with many expressions of affection to the queen, and zeal for the continued amity between the kingdoms. Mary instantly commenced preparations for her journey. "This present day," says Randolph, "she hath directed her letters again to all the noblemen of her realm, to be with all convenient speed with her at Edinburgh, and for this cause departeth herself hitherward to-morrow, as the most convenient place to take resolution in all things she hath to do. It pleased her grace immediately after she had conferred with the Lord of Lethington, and had received my sovereign's picture, to send for me. After she had rehearsed many such purposes, as by the Lord of Lethington's report unto her grace had been spoken of her by my sovereign, touching her sisterly affection towards her, her good will and earnest desire to continue in peace and amity, and, in special, that they might see each other, she sheweth unto me my said sovereign's picture, and asketh me how like that was unto her lively face? I answered unto her, that I trusted that her grace should shortly be judge thereof herself, and find much more perfection than could be set forth by the art of man."—"That," saith she, "is the thing that I have most desired, ever since I was in hope thereof, and she shall well assure herself there shall be no stay

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 3d June 1562.

in me, though it were to take any pains, or to do more than I may well say; and I trust by that time that we have spoken together, our hearts will be so eased, that the greatest grief that ever after shall be between us, will be when we shall take leave the one of the other. And let God be my witness, I honour her in my heart, and love her as my dear and natural sister. Let me be believed of you, that I do not feign. . . . Since, therefore," concludes Randolph, "the princesses' hearts are so wedded together, as divers ways it is manifest that they are; seeing the purpose is so godly, without other respects but to live in love, I doubt not but, how much soever the world rage thereat, the greater will be the glory unto them both, and the success of the enterprise the happier. To resolve, therefore, with your honour herein, I find in this queen so much good will as can be possible; in many of her subjects no less desire than in herself; the rest not such that any such account is to be made of, that either they can hinder the purpose, or do great good, whatsoever they become."²

All things being thus in readiness for the interview, and Mary looking forward to it with the ardent and sanguine feelings which belonged to her character, an unexpected obstacle arose from the quarter of France. In that country, the religious and political struggle between the Catholic party and the Protestants suddenly assumed a more fierce and sanguinary aspect; and the Queen of England, who steadily supported Coligny and the Protestants, resolved to remain for the whole summer at home, to watch the proceedings of the league which France, Spain, Savoy, and Rome, had organized against the common cause of the Reformation. It may, indeed, be doubted, whether Elizabeth was ever sincere in her wish to have a meeting with Mary. It is at least certain that she readily seized this cause of delay; and in July de-

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 15th July 1562.

spatched Sir Henry Sidney into Scotland to defer the interview of the two queens till the ensuing summer. Mary received Sidney with expressions of unfeigned disappointment and sorrow. She listened to his embassy, as he himself reports, "with watery eyes;" and Mar and Lethington assured him, that had she not already found a vent for her passionate grief in her private chamber, the expression of it would have been still more violent.¹ It is evident that her heart was intent upon this object, and the delay may have caused a painful suspicion of the sincerity of the English queen, for whose sake she had already made no inconsiderable sacrifices. Yet the message of Elizabeth was warm and cordial. She assured Mary, that to have seen her dear sister that summer was her earnest desire; that she now delayed the meeting with the utmost reluctance, and had so fully determined to enjoy her company in the spring, that she had sent by Sidney her confirmation of the treaty for the interview, leaving it to her to fix upon any days between the 20th of May and the last of August.² Mary was reassured, and would instantly have accepted the treaty and named the day of meeting; but most of her council being absent, Lethington thought it prudent to delay, and promised within a month to send her final resolution.³

The queen, relieved from this anxiety, now resolved to visit the northern parts of her dominions; and, following her own inclination rather than the advice of her council,⁴ made preparations for her progress as far as Inverness; but before she set out, a Jesuit arrived in Scotland with a secret message from the pope. So violent at this time was the feeling of the common people against any intercourse with Rome, that Mary did not dare to receive him openly; but whilst the

Protestant nobles were at the sermon, Lethington conveyed him by stealth into the queen's closet. The preacher, however, was more brief than usual in his discourse, and the Earl of Mar, coming suddenly into the antechamber, had nearly discovered the interview; so that the papal envoy was smuggled away by the Marys with much speed and alarm, yet not before Randolph had caught a glimpse of "a strange visage," which filled him full of suspicion. "The effect of his legation," says this ambassador, "was to know whether she could send unto the General Council, (he means the Council of Trent, then sitting;) and he was directed to use his influence to keep her steadfast in her religion; so at least the secretary assured him; but he believed there was more under this commission than he or Lethington was permitted to see."⁵ The messenger, who was a bishop, narrowly escaped; for no sooner was it known that a papal emissary had dared to set his foot in Scotland, than his death was resolved on; and nothing saved him but the peremptory remonstrance of Mar.⁶

Mary now set out on her progress northward, accompanied by most of her principal nobles. At Aberdeen she was met by the Earl of Huntly, the head of the Romish party and the great rival of Mar. This nobleman was nearly allied to the Duke of Chastelherault, by the marriage of his eldest son, Lord Gordon, to the daughter of Hamilton; and both Huntly and the duke, although separated by difference of religious faith, were jealous of the power of Mar, and enemies to the strict amity with England. Huntly, indeed, had felt keenly the neglect and want of confidence with which he had been treated by the queen. She had received with coldness the advances made by him and his party immediately after the death of her husband; his offer to re-establish the ancient religion on her arrival in her dominions had been repelled;

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sidney to Cecil, 25th July 1562, Edinburgh.

² Instructions to Sir H. Sidney. Haynes, p. 392.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 29th July 1562.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 10th August 1562.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 1st August 1562.

⁶ Ibid.

although he held the high office of chancellor, and sat in the privy-council, his influence was merely nominal; and, which cut deeper than all, he discovered that Mar intended to possess himself of the earldom of Moray, an extensive and opulent appanage, of which he, for some years back, had enjoyed the revenues and wielded the power. Shortly before this, one of his sons, Sir John Gordon, having a private feud with Lord Ogilvy, had attacked and desperately wounded this nobleman in the streets of the capital. The assailant being seized and imprisoned, broke from his confinement and fled to his estates. Mary was exasperated; but the eloquence of the countess his mother assuaged her resentment, and brought her son to reason. The offender appeared before his sovereign, and was ordered to ward in the castle of Stirling. When on his road thither, he again repented of his submission, escaped from his guards, and gathering a thousand horsemen, bade defiance to the royal power. Such was the state of things when Huntly heard of the queen's resolution to visit his country, accompanied by Mar and her principal nobility. He had long envied the influence of that earl with the queen; and being strong in friends, and possessed of almost sovereign authority in those northern districts, he seems to have had the temerity to believe that the moment had arrived when a revolution might be accomplished, which would rid him of his rival, and place in his hands the chief power of the government. But Mary suspected his practices and dreaded his ambition. On being pressed by him to visit his house at Strathbogie, of which the magnificence rivalled her own palaces, she declined paying that honour to the father of a rebel; and pushing forward to the castle of Inverness, where it was her intention to remain for some time, she found its gates insolently shut against her. On the place being summoned, it was answered by the captain, a retainer of Huntly's, that without the orders of Lord Gordon, for whom he held it, the castle

should not be given up. This was open rebellion; and Mary, having raised the force of the country, prepared to carry the place by assault. On this occasion the queen evinced something of the warlike spirit of her ancestors. Instead of lamenting that she had engaged in a journey so full of peril, "she repented she was not a man, to know what life it was to lie all night in the fields, or walk the rounds with a jack and knapskull."¹ Her military aspirations, however, were not gratified by an actual siege: the captain, having surrendered, was hanged; and Mary, although informed that Huntly watched to intercept her in the woods on the banks of the Spey, advanced against him, crossed the river without seeing an enemy, and returned at the head of three thousand men to Aberdeen. There was a romance and danger about the expedition which pleased the queen, and awakened some knightly enthusiasm in Randolph, the English envoy, who accompanied her. "What desperate blows," says he, in his letter to Cecil, "would that day have been given—when every man should have fought in sight of so noble a queen, and so many fair ladies, our enemies to have taken them from us, and we to save our honours and not to be bereft of them—your honour may easily imagine."²

Huntly seems to have overrated his strength, but it was now too late to recede; and his animosity was stimulated to the highest pitch, by Mary rewarding Mar, on her return to Aberdeen, with the prize he had long coveted, the earldom of Moray. He persuaded himself that nothing short of his ruin was contemplated; and having made a last and ineffectual attempt to mollify the royal resentment, he fortified his castles of Findlater, Achendown, and Strathbogie, assembled his vassals, and pushed rapidly to Aberdeen, in the hope of seizing the queen. But the result was disastrous; as he marched forward,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 18th September 1562.

² Ibid. 24th September 1562.

his force melted away, and with scarce five hundred men, he found himself attacked by the Earls of Moray, Morton, and Athole, at the head of two thousand men. The position where he made his last stand, was a hill named Corrichie, about twelve miles from the city. From this, being driven by the fire of the arquebuses into a low marshy level, he was set upon by the spearmen of Moray, and completely defeated; himself slain, whether by the sword or suffocation, from the weight of his armour, was uncertain; his two sons made prisoners, and the rest of his company either killed, dispersed, or taken.¹

Sir John Gordon, the second son, who was reported to have been the chief contriver of this rebellion, and whose ambition aspired to the hand of the queen, was immediately executed; and the body of Huntly, according to a savage feudal practice, after having been eviscerated, was kept unburied till parliament should pronounce upon it the sentence of treason, (2d November 1562.) His third son, Adam Gordon, a youth of eighteen, received a pardon; but the eldest, Lord Gordon, was found guilty of treason and imprisoned;—the immense estates of the family were seized by the crown, the title forfeited, and this all-potent house reduced in a moment to insignificance and beggary.

Some authors, guided by their prejudices rather than their research, have imagined that the fate of this great baron may be traced to a pre-meditated conspiracy of Moray, who carried the queen north, and prevailed on her to provoke Huntly into rebellion by her suspicions and neglect. This is mere conjecture: it is certain that the northern progress was planned by the queen herself, and that her council, of whom Moray was the chief, so far from exciting Mary against Huntly, urged her to visit him at Strathbogie.² Sir John Gordon con-

fessed his treasonable designs, and laid the burden of them on his father; two confidential servants of Huntly's, Thomas Ker and his brother, acknowledged that their master, on three several occasions, had plotted to cut off Moray and Lethington; and the queen herself, in a conversation with Randolph, thanked God for having delivered her enemy into her hand. "She declared," says this minister, who was an eye-witness and companion of the northern progress, "many a shameful and detestable part that he thought to have used against her, as to have married her where he would, to have slain her brother, and whom other he liked; the places, the times, where it should have been done; and how easy a matter, it was, if God had not preserved her."³ It was natural that Moray should rejoice in the fall of so potent an enemy to the Protestant party as Huntly. It is true that he availed himself of his offences to strengthen his own power; but that, prior to the rebellion, he had laid a base design to entrap him into treason, is an opinion founded on conjecture, and contradicted by fact.

Mary now returned to her capital⁴ and devoted herself to the cares of government; but the difficulties of her situation increased. War had begun (to use the words of Secretary Maitland) between the two countries of the earth which, next to her own, were most dear to her,⁵ France and England—being descended of the blood of both of them by her father, and one of them by her mother. France was ready to urge her by the love she bore her relatives there, by the recollections of her early education in that country, and by the ties of a common faith, not to desert her friends, when her assistance might be of essential benefit. Elizabeth, on the other hand, explained by her ambas-

to Cecil, Edinburgh, 10th August 1562. Ibid., same to same, 31st August 1562.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 23d October 1562. Ibid., same to same, 28th October 1562. Ibid., same to same, 2d November 1562.

⁴ 21st November 1562.

⁵ Keith, p. 232.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 2d November 1562. Also, same to same, 2d November 1562.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph

sador, the causes which compelled her to send an army into France. The French king's subjects in Normandy had urged her, she said, to relieve them from the unjust tyranny of the house of Guise; and as that monarch was unable to give them assistance, she had entered into a treaty with the Prince of Condé, by which it was agreed he should receive support both in forces and money.¹

When Randolph communicated this information to Mary, she did not dissemble her sorrow, nor conceal her affection for her uncles. "This," said she, "I must say in their defence—I believe them to be true subjects to their prince, and that they do no more than execute his orders; but," she added, "that she was not so unreasonable as to condemn those who differed from her in opinion, still less was she inclined, on their account, to abate anything of the friendship she felt for his mistress the Queen of England (2d November 1562.) It was, in truth, scarcely possible for Elizabeth to entertain at this moment any serious fears of Mary's intrigues in France, when we find Randolph assuring Cecil, that she heard almost as seldom from that country as the King of Muscovy.²

Everything, indeed, seemed to favour the growing strength of the party of the Congregation in Scotland: the fall of Huntly, the amity with England, the queen's partiality to Moray, the decided favour shewn to the Protestants, and the gentleness with which she pleaded for her uncles, all evinced a determination in the queen not to allow her personal convictions on the subject of religion to interfere with her duties as a sovereign.) It was only to be regretted, that the conduct of Knox, and the more violent of his brethren, occasionally excited feelings of resentment, when there was a predisposition to peace; and that his endeavours to secure the triumph of his party, (conscientious as they un-

doubtedly were,) were seldom accompanied by sound discretion or Christian love. Even Randolph, their partial friend, was shocked by the manner in which the preachers prayed for the queen. "They pray," says he, in his letter to Cecil, "that God will keep us from the bondage of strangers; and for herself, as much in effect as, that God will either turn her heart or send her short life.") He added, ironically, "Of what charity or spirit this proceedeth, I leave to be discussed by the great divines."³ Although the queen, as we learn from Lethington's letters, behaved towards the Reformer with much forbearance, it seems to have created no impression in her favour. As long as she retained her own faith, and permitted the celebration of mass in her private chapel, nothing could disarm his suspicions, appease his wrath, or check the personality of his attacks. His natural disposition was sarcastic, he had a strong sense of the ludicrous, and when provoked, his invectives were so minute, coarse, and humorous, that they alternately excited ridicule or indignation. Lethington scoffed, Morton commanded him to hold his peace, and Randolph, as we have seen, regretted that his proceedings had more zeal than charity.

News having arrived about this time of the restoration of peace to France, the queen, who took a deep interest in her uncles, was disposed to be merry; and the court, reflecting the countenance of the prince, was much occupied in masques and dancing; but to the news of peace were added suspicions of an intended persecution of the Protestants by the Guises; and Knox, grieving for his brethren, and scandalized at the prevailing gaieties, fulminated a complaint in the pulpit against the ignorance, tyranny, and malevolence of princes. His words were meant chiefly to apply to the Guises; but he was reported to have spoken irreverently of his sovereign, and was brought before her to answer for his attack. His defence, which he has himself pre-

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Sir J. Williamson's Collection, 2d series, vol. ii. pp. 169, 179.

² State-paper Office, MS. Letter, Randolph to Cecil, 30th Dec. 1562.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 28th Feb. 1562-3.

served in his history, was calculated rather to aggravate than extenuate the provocation. "Madam," said he, "this is oftentimes the just recompense which God gives the stubborn of the world, that because they will not hear God speaking to the comfort of the penitent, and for amendment of the wicked, they are oft compelled to hear the false report of others, to their great displeasure. I doubt not that it came to the ears of Herod, that our Master Jesus Christ called him a fox; but they told him not how odious a thing it was before God to murder an innocent, as he had lately done before, causing to behead John the Baptist, to reward the dancing of a harlot's daughter. If the reporters of my words had been honest men, they would have repeated my words, and the circumstances of the same; but because they would have credit in court, and wanting virtue worthy thereof, they needs must have somewhat to pleasure your majesty, if it were but flatteries and lies; but such pleasure, if any your majesty take in such persons, will turn to your everlasting displeasure; for, madam, if your own ears had heard the whole matter that I treated, if there be in you any spark of the spirit of God, yea, of honesty and wisdom, you would not justly have been offended with anything that I spake. And because you have heard their report, please your majesty to hear myself rehearse the same, so near as memory will serve [it was even next day after that the sermon was made.] My text, madam, was this: 'And now, oh, kings, understand; be learned, ye judges of the earth.' After I had declared the dignity of kings and rulers, the honour wherein God has placed them, the obedience that is due unto them, being God's lieutenants, I demanded this question: But oh, alas, what account shall the most part of princes make before that supreme Judge, whose throne and authority so manifestly and shamefully they abuse? The complaint of Solomon is this day most true, that violence and oppression do occupy the throne of God here on this earth, for whilst that

murderers, bloodthirsty men, oppressors, and malefactors dare be bold to present themselves before kings and princes, and that the poor saints of God are banished and exiled, what shall we say, but that the devil hath taken possession in the throne of God, which ought to be a dread to all wicked doers, and a refuge to the innocent and oppressed? And how can it be otherwise, for princes will not understand, they will not be learned as God commands them; but they despise God's law; His statutes and holy ordinances they will not understand? For in fiddling and flinging they are more exercised, than in reading or hearing God's most blessed word; and fiddlers and flatterers (which commonly corrupt youth) are more precious in their eyes than men of wisdom and gravity, who by wholesome admonitions may beat down in them some part of that vanity and pride wherein we are all born, but which in princes takes deep root and strength by evil education. And of dancing, madam, I said, that albeit in Scripture I found no praise of it, and in profane writers, that it is termed the gesture rather of those that are mad and in frenzy than of sober men; yet I do not utterly condemn it, provided that two vices be avoided: the former, that the principal vocation of those that use that exercise be not neglected for the pleasure of dancing; secondly, that they dance not as the Philistines, their fathers, for the pleasure that they take in the displeasure of God's people; for if they do these, or either of them, they shall receive the reward of dancers, and that will be to drink in hell, unless they repent."—"Your words are sharp enough even now," said Mary; "and yet they were told me in another manner. I know that you and my uncles are not of one religion, and, therefore, I cannot blame you for conceiving so ill an opinion of them; but for myself, if you disapprove of aught, come to myself, speak openly, and I shall hear you." "Madam," answered Knox, "I am assured that your uncles are enemies to God, and unto His Son

Jesus Christ, and for the maintenance of their own pomp and worldly glory, that they spare not to spill the blood of many innocents: and, therefore, I am assured, their enterprises shall have no better success than others have had, who before them have done as they do now.¹

A melancholy incident soon after occurred, which in some measure justified Knox in his censure of the licentious manners of the court. Mary, who was passionately fond of music, had shewn much favour to Chartellet, a French gentleman of good family, highly skilled in that science, and in other respects a handsome and accomplished person. Such encouragement² from a beautiful woman, and a queen, turned the unfortunate man's head; he aspired to her love, and, in a fit of amorous frenzy, hid himself in the royal bed-chamber, where, some minutes before she entered it, he was discovered by her female attendants. The circumstance was not disclosed to the queen till the succeeding morning, when, with an ill-judged lenity, she contented herself with commanding him to leave the court. Desperate in his attachment, however, he secretly followed her to Burntisland, and at night, when the queen was stepping into bed, and none beside her but her ladies, Chartellet again started from a recess, where he had concealed himself. The shrieks of the women soon roused the court, and when seized by those who rushed in, on hearing the uproar in the royal apartment, he audaciously acknowledged that he had meditated an attempt on the honour of the queen. Mary, glowing with indignation at the insult, commanded Moray, who first

ran to her succour, to stab him with his dagger; but he preferred securing him to this summary vengeance: a formal trial followed, and the miserable man was condemned and executed within two days after his offence.³ On the scaffold, instead of having recourse to his missal or breviary, he drew from his pocket a volume of Ronsard, and reading the poet's Hymn to Death, resigned himself to his fate with gaiety and indifference.⁴ It was a lamentable spectacle: men blamed, but at the same time pitied him; they had not forgotten the recent flight of Captain Hepburn, who had behaved with brutal indelicacy to Mary; it seemed strange that, within a short time, two such outrageous insults should have been offered, and some did not scruple to blame the indiscriminate condescension of the queen, whose love of admiration made her sometimes forget the dignity and reserve which are so sure a protection of female purity.

Shortly after this, the Scottish queen became disturbed by a rumour, that some measures, prejudicial to her right of succession, were contemplated in the English parliament, and she despatched Lethington to England, that he might watch over her interests (12th February 1562-3).⁵ He was enjoined not only to attend to the affair of the succession, but to endeavour to promote a reconciliation between Elizabeth and the party of the Guises; and, after he had concluded his transactions, to pass over to France with the same object. The secretary undertook the mission with reluctance; yet, with his usual ability, he succeeded in accomplishing the most important of his objects. No discussion of Mary's title took place; and the

¹ Knox, pp. 334, 335. The time of this conversation between the Reformer and the queen is fixed by a passage in a MS. Letter from Randolph to Cecil, dated 16th December 1562, State-paper Office. "Upon Sunday last, he [Knox] inveighed sore against the queen's dancing, and little exercise of herself in virtue and godliness. The report hereof being brought unto her ears, *yesterday*, she sent for him. She talked long time with him; little liking there was between them, of the one or the other, yet did they so depart as no offence or slander did rise thereon."

² Keith, p. 231.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 28th February 1562-3.

⁴ Brantome, vol. ii. p. 332. Randolph says, he died with repentance.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, 12th February 1562-3. Keith, p. 235, complains that the date of Maitland's Mission is *irrecoverably* lost. It is *fixed* by the above letter.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 6th Feb. 1562-3.

good understanding between the two queens continued, apparently at least, as firm as before.

It was beyond his power, however, to heal the wounds of France; and although Mary, in pathetic and earnest terms, offered herself as a mediatrix between her good sister Elizabeth and that country, the recent course of events there had assumed an aspect which precluded all hopes of success, and were viewed by her with the deepest emotions. A zealous Catholic, and warmly attached to her uncles, she watched with interest the progress of events, and rejoiced in the successes which, at Bruges, Rouen, and Dreux, attended the arms of the Duke of Guise; (but she was shocked with the ferocious character which the war had assumed.) It was melancholy to see the country which was so dear to her, the land of her infancy, where she had passed her happiest years, flooded with the blood of its citizens; its towns stormed and razed, and its brave nobility opposed in mortal strife to each other; even the news of their successes raised such conflicting feelings, that she heard them with tears;¹ and on receiving accounts of the assassination of the Duke of Guise, her grief was poignant;² yet she continued to make every effort for the restoration of concord in that country, and the preservation of amity with England. The insincerity and caprice of Elizabeth; the intrigues of Randolph, who secretly encouraged Scottish volunteers to assist the Huguenots;³ the violence and suspicion of Knox, which even Randolph pronounced unreasonable;⁴ and the intrigues of Cecil, could not deter her from that upright policy, which persuaded her that many sacrifices should be made rather than break with England. She was cast down, indeed, when she beheld the increasing difficulties which were gathering around her; and the letters of the English minister present us with many painful

pictures of her grief and embarrassment. Yet, when Cecil was disposed to doubt her sincerity, the same acute observer derides the vain fears of this statesman, and bears testimony to the friendly disposition of the queen, her councillors, and her people, towards England.

The two great objects which now filled Mary's mind, and employed the earnest deliberations of her ministers, were her right of succession to the English throne, and her marriage. On both points she was anxious, as indeed it was her interest, to consult the wishes of Elizabeth.⁴ She had now remained in a widowed state for three years: she was convinced that a speedy marriage was the best measure for herself and her kingdom; her opinion was fortified by that of Moray and Lethington, and her hand had been already sought by the king of Sweden, the Infant of Spain, and the Archduke Charles, second son of the emperor; yet Elizabeth, although ever ready to oppose every foreign match, continued to preserve much mystery in stating her own wishes on the subject. It was evident it could not long suit the dignity of an independent princess to listen to ingenious objections, and repress every royal suitor in submission to the wishes of a sister queen. About this time a report having reached the English court, that the successful candidate was one of the emperor's lineage, Cecil wrote in much alarm to Moray, who replied with firmness and good sense, that nothing serious had been yet concluded. But he added, that neither was it for her honour, nor could he advise her, to repress the suit of princes, however deeply interested in the continuance of the friendship between the two queens, and the mutual love and quietness of their subjects.⁶

Mary's difficulties, however, arose not merely from the interference and jealousy of the English queen, and the

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 5th January 1562-3.

² Ibid, 18th March 1562-3.

³ Ibid, 10th March 1562-3.

⁴ Ibid, 16th December 1562.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 15th May 1563.—Keith, p. 239, printed in Robertson's Appendix, No. vii.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Moray to Cecil, 23d September 1563.

mysterious diplomacy of Cecil : the violence of the party which was headed by Knox and the reformed preachers occasioned her infinite disquiet, and was at length carried to such a height as to occasion a schism amongst the Protestants themselves. We have seen that this party disapproved entirely of the lenity with which Mary had been permitted the private exercise of her religion. The laxity with which the enactments against the mass were carried into execution excited their constant suspicion, and they persuaded themselves it was in vain to look for the favour of God till Presbyterianism, in its most rigid form, was established throughout the country. In this view, some whispers which began to float about regarding the marriage of Mary to a noble person recommended by Elizabeth, and, as a basis of this union, the restoration of complete amity between the two queens, gave them no little alarm. They knew the aversion of the English queen, as well as of Mary, to the form of worship which they believed the only system founded on Scripture; and it was really more tolerable for them to see their royal mistress a confirmed Papist and the enemy of England, than the friend and (as had been anticipated more than once by Randolph and Lethington) convert of Elizabeth to the Church of England.

To excite suspicions and interrupt the good understanding between the two queens became, therefore, a favourite object with Knox and the more violent of the reformers. They did not hesitate to blame Moray and Lethington for their anxiety to accomplish an interview, and traversed their praiseworthy efforts, by representing all the friendship professed by Mary as hollow and insidious. And yet, even from Knox himself, we learn some facts which might have convinced him of the contrary.

During the absence of Lethington in England, the Papists, encouraged by the Bishop of St Andrews and the Prior of Whithern, had disregarded the queen's proclamation. Mass was

celebrated secretly in many private houses; and, when this was found dangerous, the votaries of the Romish faith fled into the woods and mountains, where, amidst their silent solitudes, they adhered to the worship of their fathers.¹ Upon this the Presbyterians, despairing, as they alleged, of any redress of such abuse from the queen, took the law into their own hands, pursued and seized some priests, and sent word to the Romish clergy, that henceforth they would neither complain to the queen nor council, but, with their own hands, execute upon idolaters the punishment contained in God's Word.² Mary, justly alarmed at this, sent for Knox to Lochleven, where she then resided, and remonstrated in earnest terms. She recommended toleration, and argued with him upon the cruelty of religious persecution. The Reformer pleaded the laws in force against idolatry; these, he said, it was the duty of princes to execute; if they failed so to do, others must do it for them; nor would God be offended if men, who feared Him, albeit neither kings nor magistrates, took it upon them to inflict judgment. "Samuel," said he, "spared not to slay Agag the fat and delicate king of Amalek, whom Saul had saved; nor did Elias spare Jezebel's prophets and Baal's priests, although King Ahab stood by. Phinehas was no magistrate, but he feared not to strike Zimri and Cozbi."³ These examples proved, he contended, that subjects might lawfully punish, although they were not clothed with the authority of the magistrate. But he besought the queen not to compel any one to this last resource, but herself administer the laws. "Think, madam," he concluded, "think of the mutual contract, and the mutual duties between yourself and your subjects. They are bound to obey you: ye are bound to keep the laws unto them. You crave of them service: they demand of you protection and defence against wicked doers."³

¹ Randolph to Cecil, 1st May 1563.—Keith, 239.

² Knox, p. 352.

³ Ibid. p. 353.

This bold exposition produced a favourable effect. Mary, for the moment, seemed offended, but soon after she sent for Knox, who met her next day as she pursued her pastime of hawking. Their interview was amicable—almost confidential. The queen, alluding to the intended election of a superintendent for Dumfries and the adjacent country, warned the Reformer against the Bishop of Caithness, who was a candidate for that preferment; and she informed him with great frankness, that his reasoning of yesterday had convinced her—that the offenders should be summoned, and justice duly administered.¹

Nor was this promise forgotten. On the 19th of May, a few days before the meeting of parliament, the Archbishop of St Andrews, the Prior of Whithern, the Parson of Sanquhar, and other Papists, were arraigned before Argyle the Justice-general, for the crime of celebrating mass; and, having pleaded guilty, were subjected to a temporary imprisonment.²

The parliament now met, and was held with unusual pomp. Mary, surrounded by a brilliant cavalcade, rode in procession to the Tolbooth, where the estates assembled; the hall was crowded, not only by the members, but glittered with the splendid dresses of the royal household and the ladies of the court, who surrounded the throne and filled the galleries. The extreme beauty of the queen, and the grace with which she delivered the address in which she opened the proceedings, surprised and delighted her people: many exclaimed, “May God save that sweet face! she speaks as properly as the best orator among them!”³

Amidst this general enthusiasm, the preachers took great offence at the

liberty of the French manners, and the extravagance of the foreign dresses. “They spake boldly,” says Knox, “against the superfluities of their clothes, and affirmed, that the vengeance of God would fall, not only on the foolish women, but on the whole realm.” To check the growing licentiousness, an attempt was made to introduce a sumptuary law; articles against apparel were drawn up, and it was proposed to take order with other abuses; but, to the extreme mortification of the Reformer, he was arrested in his career of legislation by the hand of the Lord James. This powerful minister deemed it impolitic at this moment to introduce these enactments. “The queen,” he said, “had kept her promises, the religion was established, the mass-mongers were punished: if they carried things too high, she would hold no parliament at all.”

Knox smiled significantly—Mar, he hinted, trembled for his new earldom of Moray, and all must be postponed to have his grant confirmed, lest Mary should repent of her munificence; he denounced, in strong terms, such selfish motives, reminded him of his solemn engagements to the Church, and accused him of sacrificing truth to convenience, and the service of his God to the interests of his ambition. The proud spirit of Moray could not brook such an attack, and he replied with asperity; the two friends parted in anger, and the Reformer increased the estrangement by addressing a letter in which, in his usual plain and vehement style of reproof, he exonerated himself of all further care in his lordship’s affairs, committing him to the guidance of his own understanding, whose dictates he preferred to the advancement of the truth. “I praise my God,” said he, “I leave you victor over your enemies, promoted to great honour, and in authority with your sovereign. Should this continue, none will be more glad than I; but if you decay, (as I fear ye shall,) then call to mind by what means the Most High exalted you: it was neither by trifling with impiety, nor maintaining pesti-

¹ Knox, p. 354, 19th May 1563.

² Ibid. p. 356.—Keith, p. 239. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 28th February, 1562-3. Also Keith, p. 239. From the shattered MS. Randolph to Cecil, 20th May 1563.

³ Knox, p. 358.—Randolph to Cecil, 3d June 1563.—Keith, p. 239. The address had been written in French, but she translated it, and spoke it in English.

lent papists." So incensed was Moray with this remonstrance, that, for a year and a half, he and Knox scarcely exchanged words together.¹

Far from being intimidated by this desertion, the Reformer seized the opportunity of the parliament to address the nobility upon the subject of God's mercies to them as a commonwealth, and their own ingratitude. He had been with them, he declared, in their most desperate temptations; he was now with them in the days of their success and forgetfulness, and it was some relief to pour forth the sorrows of his heart, to remind them of the perils they had survived—to warn them of the duties they had neglected.

"I see," said he, getting animated in his subject, and suddenly stretching out his arms as if he would leap from the pulpit and arrest the vision passing before him,² "I see before me the beleagured camp at St Johnston: I see your meeting on Cupar Muir; I hear the tramp of the horsemen as they charged you in the streets of Edinburgh: and, most of all, is that dark and dolorous night now present to my eyes in which all of you, my lords, in shame and fear left this town—and God forbid I should ever forget it!—what was then, I say, my exhortation unto you? and what is fallen in vain of all that God ever promised you by my mouth? Speak, I say, for ye yourselves live to testify. There is not one of you against whom death and destruction were threatened who hath perished in that danger; and how many of your enemies hath God plagued before your eyes? And is this to be the thankfulness ye shall render unto your God, to betray His cause, when you have it in your hands to establish it as you please? The queen says, 'Ye will not agree with her.' Ask of her that which by God's Word ye may justly require; and if she will not agree with you in God, ye are not bound to agree with her faction in the devil. Let her plainly

understand so far of your minds; forsake not your former courage in God's cause, and be assured He will prosper you in your enterprises. And now, my lords," he concluded, "to put an end to all, I hear of the queen's marriage: dukes, brethren to emperors and kings, strive all for the best gain. But this, my lords, will I say—note the day, and bear witness hereafter: whenever the nobility of Scotland, who profess the Lord Jesus, consent that an infidel (and all papists are infidels) shall be head to our sovereign, ye do as far as in you lieth to banish Christ Jesus from this realm, and to bring God's vengeance on the country."³

This extraordinary licence, and the boldness with which the Reformer availed himself of his sacred character to attack the sovereign, and dictate to the council, called forth the indignation both of Catholics and Protestants.⁴ He was summoned to answer before the queen, and, coming to court after dinner, was brought into her cabinet by Erskine of Dun, the superintendent of Angus and Mearns. Mary, whose feelings were keen, upbraided him with his ingratitude; she had borne, she said, with all his severest censures; she had sought his friendship, had offered him audience and preferment, but all in vain; nothing would mollify, nothing would silence him; and as she said this, she began to weep and lament aloud, exclaiming, that he had nothing to do with her marriage, and warning him, with broken words and passionate gestures, to beware of her revenge. As soon as he could be heard, Knox attempted to defend himself, affirming, that in the pulpit he was not master of himself, but must obey His commands who had bade him speak plain, and flatter no flesh; as for the favours which had been offered to him, his vocation, he said, was neither to wait in the courts of princes nor

¹ Knox, p. 357.

² Melvil's Diary, p. 26. "He was like to ding the pulpit in blads [tatters] and flee out of it."

³ Knox, p. 359.

⁴ Knox, p. 359. "These words," says he, "and this manner of speaking, were judged intolerable. Papists and Protestants were both offended."

in the chambers of ladies, but to preach the gospel.—“I grant it so,” reiterated the queen; “but what have you to do with my marriage? or what are you within the commonwealth?”—“A subject born within the same,” said the Reformer; “and albeit, madam, neither baron, lord, nor belted earl, yet hath God made me, how abject soever in your eyes, a useful and profitable member. As such, it is my duty, as much as that of any one of the nobility, to forewarn the people of danger; and, therefore, what I have said in public I here repeat to your own face. Whenever the nobility of this realm shall so far forget themselves as to consent that you shall be subject to an unlawful husband, they do as much as in them lieth to renounce Christ, to banish the truth, betray the freedom of the realm, and, perchance, may be but cold friends to yourself.”¹

This new attack brought on a still more passionate burst of tears; and Mary, who could scarcely be appeased by the soothing speeches of the Laird of Dun, commanded Knox to quit the apartment. In obeying this, a scene occurred which was strikingly characteristic: the Reformer, passing into the outer chamber, found himself shunned and avoided by the nobles of the court, who looked strangely on him, as if they had never known him before. His temper was not, however, of the kind to be cast down by the desertion of these summer friends; and, observing a circle of the ladies of the queen’s household sitting near, in their gorgeous apparel, he could not depart without a word of admonition. “Ah, fair ladies,” said he, between jest and earnest, “how pleasant were this life of yours, if it should ever abide, and then in the end we might pass to heaven with this gear! But fie on that knave, Death—that will come whether ye will or not; and when he hath laid on the arrest, then foul worms will be busy with this flesh, be it never so fair and tender; and the

silly soul, I fear, shall be so feeble, that it can neither carry with it gold, garnishing, targating, pearl, nor precious stones.”² In the midst of these speeches, the Laird of Dun came out of the queen’s cabinet, and requested Knox to go home; nor does it appear that Mary took any further notice of his officious and uncalled-for interference with her marriage.

When Lethington returned from his prolonged embassy to England and France, he expressed much indignation against the violence of Knox and his party; he affirmed that the reports which they had raised, regarding a match with Spain, tended directly to excite the jealousy of Elizabeth, and to create unworthy suspicions between the Scottish queen and her Protestant subjects. To discredit the Reformer, who had already quarrelled with Moray, became his great object, and this added bitterness to the schism which divided the more moderate from the more violent of the Protestants. We cannot wonder, indeed, that the fearless and declared opposition of this extraordinary man, who possessed great power, not only over his own friends, but over the people, provoked and thwarted so refined and crafty a politician as Lethington; and as Knox corresponded with Cecil, and was indefatigable in procuring secret information both from England and the Continent, the secretary found him no easy enemy to deal with.

Not long after the return of Lethington, and when every proceeding on the part of Mary and her ministers was dictated by an anxious desire to conciliate Elizabeth, the Reformer, instead of seconding these efforts, addressed to Cecil a letter full of suspicion and alarm. He assured him, that out of the twelve who formed the queen’s council, nine had been gained over to that which, in the end, would prove their destruction.³ Everything,

² Knox, p. 361. “He merrily said.” The speech is in the very vein of Hamlet—“Get ye to my lady’s chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come—make her laugh at that.”

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Knox to Cecil, 6th October 1563.

¹ This must have been in May, 1563. Knox, p. 361.

he added, depended on the firmness of Moray; if he failed or faltered, all was lost. As for himself, he declared, he was prepared for the worst, and had little to fear on his own account; but it was lamentable to see the dark cloud of calamities which was preparing to burst upon his country, and all because men must follow the inordinate affections of her who was born to be the plague of her realm. The key to part of this despondency is to be found in a sentence of the same letter, which, alluding to a late progress of the queen, informed Cecil, that "the conveying of the mass through these quarters, which longest had been best reformed, had dejected the hearts of many, and caused him to disclose the plainness of a troubled heart."¹ Yet although probably he was over-excited, and too much alarmed, it is certain that Knox had good ground to believe that intrigues, for the marriage of the queen with some foreign potentate of her own religion, were then secretly agitated both in Scotland and on the Continent.

It was probably her conviction of the truth of this which at the last drove Elizabeth from all her delays and excuses, and compelled her to point out plainly to Mary some prince or noble person whom she judged worthy of her hand. To the astonishment of her council, she proposed her favourite Leicester, then the Lord Robert Dudley, and sent instructions to Randolph to sound the inclinations of the Scottish queen, and confer with Moray and Lethington upon the subject. As, however, he was not yet authorised to give the name,² these wary ministers, although they saw to whom he pointed, hesitated to meddle in so delicate a matter. They suspected, and not without good ground, the sincerity of the English queen; and hinted that, considering the affection which bound her to Dudley, and

him to his royal mistress, it could not be believed that she would part with her lover, or he be so base as to forsake her even for a crown.³ Randolph's perplexity in conducting these nice and difficult negotiations was strongly expressed in a letter which at this time he addressed to Cecil. "To persuade the Queen of Scotland," he observed, "to marry any man under the rank of a prince, would be a dangerous and dishonourable task for any subject to adventure; and even if Mary were ready to forget her royal dignity, and listen for a moment to the proposal of Elizabeth, there remained," he said, "a greater difficulty behind. In offering the noblest in England, none could be at a loss to divine who was meant. But how unwilling," he continued, "the queen's majesty herself would be to depart from him, and how hardly his mind could be divorced or drawn from that worthy room where it is placed, let any man see, where it cannot be thought but it is so fixed for ever, that the world would judge worse of him than of any living man, if he should not rather yield his life than alter his thoughts. Wherefore, this they (he alludes to Moray and Lethington) conclude, as well for her majesty's part, as for him who is so happy to be so far in her grace's favour, that if this queen would wholly put herself into Elizabeth's will, as to receive a husband of her selecting, either she should not have the best, or at least match herself with him that hath his mind placed already elsewhere; or if it can be withdrawn from thence, she shall take a man unworthy, from his disloyalty and inconstancy, to marry with any, much less with a queen. Whereupon, they, knowing both their affections, and judging them inseparable, think rather that no such thing is meant on my sovereign's part, and that all these offers bear a greater show of good will than any good meaning."⁴

Hitherto Randolph had not been

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Knox to Cecil, 6th October 1563.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 21st February 1563-4, Randolph to Cecil. "For whom the Queen's Majesty's Instructions licer seth me not to name, of him it shall not almost become me to have one word."

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 21st February 1563-4.

⁴ Ibid.

permitted to name any one; but shortly after, Elizabeth having caught alarm at the continued intrigues for the marriage of Mary with some foreign prince, sent him a more distinct commission on the subject; and, choosing a moment when Moray and Lethington were at the council, and Mary slenderly attended, he informed her of the wishes of his mistress, and named Lord Robert Dudley. She complained that, after long delay, he was now needlessly precipitate, and had taken her by surprise. She looked, she said, to have heard of peace between France and England, and of no such difficult matter as he had abruptly introduced. The English minister urged the necessity of a speedy decision on so important a point as her marriage, and the fair and honourable offer which was now made to her. "Your own mistress," replied Mary, "has been somewhat longer of deciding than I have been; and you know she hath counselled me to have regard to three points, whereof the special one was honour." Now, think you, Master Randolph, that it will be honourable in me to imbase my state, and marry one of her subjects? Is this conformable to her promise to use me as her sister or daughter, to advise me to marry my Lord Robert—to ally myself with her own subject?"¹

To this Randolph, waving the point most difficult to answer, urged the advantage which might result to the tranquillity and happiness of both kingdoms, and intimated that the Queen of England, by the honour and preferments with which she intended to endow Dudley, would render him not unworthy of so exalted an alliance. Mary perceived he wished her to believe that his mistress might acknowledge her right of succession, and settle the kingdom upon her and Dudley; but even this did not tempt her. "Where is my assurance," said she, "in this? What if the queen your mistress should marry herself, and have children? What have I then gotten? who will say I have acted

wisely to take this step, which requires long consideration, on so sudden a proposal as this? I have conferred with no one; and although willing not to mistrust your mistress, the adventure is too great." In reply, Randolph begged the queen to speak on the subject to Moray, Lethington, and Argyle. She agreed; and communicated Elizabeth's proposal to them the same day after supper; but Lethington informed the English envoy, that although his mistress was pleased that, after so much obscure dealing, the Queen of England at last began to speak plainly, she deemed it prudent, when all was yet so vague, to give no more definite answer than that sent to her last letter.²

If the English queen had been sincere in this proposal; had she consented, as the basis of Mary's marriage with Dudley, to acknowledge her right of succession, and agreed to confirm it by an act of the legislature, settling the crown upon their children, Moray and Lethington were ready to use all their influence to promote the union, and it is very probable that the Scottish queen would have embraced the offer.³ Upon no other supposition can we account for her conduct during this trying and tantalizing negotiation. She exhibited no indignation when the overture was first made by Randolph; she bore every delay with patience, and evinced every disposition to oblige Elizabeth. At her request and earnest recommendation, the Earl of Lennox, who had for many years been banished from Scotland, and whose proceedings against his native country had been hostile and treasonable, obtained permission to return, and was allowed to hope that his royal mistress would receive him with favour.⁴ For some time nothing had been said of the intended inter-

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 30th March 1564.

³ On the 18th March 1563 4, the queen issued a proclamation, declaring her determination to support the "religion" as she found it on her arrival. MS. Book of Privy-council, folio 126.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Elizabeth to Mary. Draft by Cecil, 16th June 1563.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 30th March 1564.

view between the two queens, and it had broken off on the part of Elizabeth; but when this princess now suddenly renewed her proposal for a meeting, although Mary's ministers, aware that it was merely a colour for delay, declined the overture, the Scottish queen herself was grieved that they did so, and earnestly desired it.¹

On her part, therefore, and in the conduct of Moray and Lethington, everything at this moment was open and friendly. On the side of Elizabeth and Cecil, on the other hand, there had been pursued, for the last three years, such a complicated system of delay, mystery, and caprice, as to create a suspicion in the minds of the Scottish ministers that the English queen was really hostile to the marriage, that she had not the slightest intention of giving up Leicester, and still less of settling the succession upon Mary. "If," said Lethington, addressing Cecil, "a conjunction be really meant, and you will prosecute the means to draw it on which were opened up by the queen my mistress's last answer, I doubt not but you will find conformity enough on this part; but if time be always driven without farther effect than hath yet followed upon any message which hath passed between them these three years, I am of opinion he shall in the end think himself most happy who hath least meddled in the matter. Gentle letters, good words, and pleasant messages, be good means to begin friendship amongst princes; but I take them to be too slender bands to hold it fast."² He then adds a remark which is strikingly descriptive of Cecil's mysterious diplomacy. "In these great causes between our sovereigns, I have ever found that fault with you, that as in your letters you always wrote obscurely, so in private communications you seldom uttered your own judgment: you might well *academico more*

dispute *in utramque partem*, leaving me in suspense to collect what I would. So, I fear, in giving advice you will walk so warily, rather [being intent] to speak nothing that may any time thereafter hurt yourself, than to speak all things that might further the matter; and I will confess I have of late enforced my natural [disposition] to learn this same lesson of you, for the reverence I bear you, that your manner of doing serves me for instruction to direct my proceeding. Marry, I fear the common affairs do not fare a whit the better for our too great wariness."³

Elizabeth was at last driven by the conduct of Mary and her ministers, to that perplexity which is the general fate of duplicity when opposed to plain and direct dealing. As a last pretext for delay, she availed herself of some secret information transmitted by Knox to Randolph, regarding the alleged intrigues of Lennox in Scotland.

This highly-allied noble had, as we have seen, obtained permission to return to that country a short time before this,⁴ and at the earnest entreaty of Elizabeth, Mary promised to lend a favourable ear to his suits. Strictly speaking, Lennox was still an outlaw, for the sentence of his forfeiture could only be removed by an act of the legislature; yet the entreaty of the English queen, the recommendation of Cecil, and the powerful interest of Moray and the Secretary Lethington, were successfully exerted in his behalf. Randolph also had instructions from Elizabeth to promote his views; and when about to leave the English court, he not only received Mary's permis-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 6th June 1564.

² The return of Lennox to Scotland is described by Keith, p. 254, as occurring on the 27th September; and the same accurate author corrects the error of Buchanan and Spottiswood who place his return in September 1563. The Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 77, states that Lennox came to Edinburgh on the 23d September. From a letter of Bedford to Cecil, MS. State-paper Office, dated 25th September 1564, compared with another letter, from the same to the same, dated 19th September, MS. State-paper Office, B.C., I believe this authority to be correct.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 5th June 1564. Also same to Lord Robert Dudley, same date.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 6th June 1564.

sion, under her great seal, to revisit his native country, but was flattered with the hope that his forfeiture would be removed, and himself replaced in the high station which belonged to his birth.

This anticipated restoration caused immediate alarm to Knox and his party. It was more than suspected that both Lennox and his son were Papists; and the Reformer, in a gloomy letter to Randolph, strongly deprecated their return.¹ His fears were instantly communicated to Elizabeth; and this princess, who was watching for a pretext to delay any negotiation on the subject of the marriage with Dudley, eagerly availed herself of this circumstance to commence a fresh system of duplicity and delay. She instantly took steps to detain the earl in England; and, although it was to gratify her own wishes, most earnestly expressed to Lethington, that Mary had consented to receive him into favour, yet, with extraordinary inconsistency, she now commanded Cecil to address letters to Moray and Lethington, requiring them to persuade the Scottish queen to revoke her promise, and command his return into her kingdom. These able men, however, at once detected her object, and met her with a peremptory refusal. The correspondence which passed upon the subject is extremely important, in reference to the events which soon after occurred; and their reply to Cecil was so sarcastic and severe, that it gave offence both to the English queen and her pliant minister.²

Alluding to the secret information which the English secretary had stated he had received from some of his best friends in Scotland, "I cannot tell," said Lethington, "whom you take to be your best friends; but I think you ought to judge those to be best who most earnestly go about to maintain quietness between

the two realms, and intelligence between the princesses, wherein I am well assured my Lord of Moray and myself have done as good offices as any other; and for us, I am bold to say, neither of us have any misliking in the matter, but rather have been instruments to further than to hinder his coming; and if any other report of our meaning be made from hence, the author thereof (he here probably alludes to Knox) hath followed his own passion, being nothing privy to our intents, abusing our names on a purpose which we do not allow."³

He next adverted to the sudden change in the queen's mind upon the subject of Lennox's return. That Elizabeth should now oppose it was "not a little marvellous," he observed, "seeing how earnestly her majesty did recommend unto me my Lord of Lennox's cause, and my lady's, at my last being in that court; nay," he continued, "suddenly after I had taken my leave, you yourself, at her majesty's commandment, did send after me by post her letters to the queen's majesty, my mistress, very affectionate in their favour, willing me to present the same with recommendation from the queen." He next remarked, that the sole cause which had moved him to exert his influence for Lennox, was the request of the English queen, which he believes also to have been his chief recommendation to Mary. "And now," said he, "having once, under her great seal, permitted him liberally to come, it will be a hard matter to persuade her majesty to revoke it; and I dare little presume to enter into any such communication with her majesty, knowing how much she doth respect her honour where promise is once passed, and how unwilling she is to change her deliberations being once resolved; which," he adds, "as she will not do herself, so doth she altogether mislike in all others."

He then alluded to Knox's apprehensions regarding the effects which Lennox's return might produce upon

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, — 3d, 1564. The date, I suspect, (from internal evidence, and a comparison with other letters,) must be 3d of September.

² Elizabeth's Instructions to Randolph, 4th October 1564. Keith, p. 257.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 13th July 1564.

the state of the reformed religion. "The religion here," he observed, "doth not depend upon my Lord of Lennox's coming, neither do those of the religion hang upon the sleeves of any one or two that may mislike his coming. For us, whether he come or not come, I take to be no great matter, up or down. Marry, that the stay should grow upon the queen's majesty's side here, it should somewhat touch her majesty in honour, having once permitted his licence so freely; unless she might shadow the change of her mind by the queen, her good sister's request, and forbid it for her pleasure, which I perceive is not your sovereign's meaning; who wishes¹ she would take the matter upon herself, which she thinketh too hard."² Moray, in a letter of the same date as the above, which he addressed to Cecil, expressed himself in terms more brief, but still more emphatic. "As to the faction," says he, "that his coming might make for the matters of religion, thanks to God, our foundation is not so weak that we have cause to fear if he had the greatest subject of this realm joined to him, seeing we have the favour of our prince, and liberty of our conscience in such abundance as our hearts can wish. It will neither be he nor I, praised be God, can hinder or alter religion hereaway; and his coming or remaining in that cause will be to small purpose."³ The English queen had addressed to Mary a letter at the same time, and to the same effect; but she replied with so much spirit, and used so little care to conceal her opinion of such inconsistent conduct, that Elizabeth was deeply offended.⁴

Thus foiled in this secret intrigue against Lennox, Elizabeth withdrew her opposition. She had been careful to have all evidence of it destroyed;⁵

¹ In the original, "who would."

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 13th July 1564.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Moray to Cecil, 13th July 1564.

⁴ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 116. Bannatyne edit.

⁵ Lethington says to Cecil, "I have used the best means I could to recover the queen's letter, that I might have returned it again to

and, to the world, therefore, everything appeared open, and consistent. The earl received her licence to leave England, and on the 23d of September, he arrived in Edinburgh, bringing with him a strong letter of recommendation from the English queen,⁶ which Mary, who knew her real sentiments, must have read with no very favourable opinion of her sincerity. This princess was then absent, on a northern progress, but she returned before the end of the month; and Lennox, having been invited by his royal mistress to present himself at court, obeyed her injunction with much state and ceremony. He rode to the palace of Holyrood, having twelve gentlemen before him, splendidly mounted and clothed in black velvet; behind him came a troop of thirty attendants bearing his arms and livery: having dismounted, the queen instantly sent for him, and their interview, which took place in the presence of the nobility, was flattering and cordial.⁷ Mary immediately communicated these particulars to Elizabeth, informing her, that from her anxiety to shew deference to her request, she had not only already given the earl some proof of her goodwill, but meant also to "proceed further to his full restitution, whereby he should be able to enjoy the privileges of a subject, the liberty of his native country, and his old titles."⁸ Soon after, the restored lord invited Randolph to dinner; and the ambassador wrote to Cecil an account of the entertainment, which proves, that the Scottish queen had been as good as her word. "I dined with my Lord of Lennox," said he, "being by him required in the morning. I found nothing less for the beautifying and furniture of his lodging than your honour hath heard by her highness, but I was answered, that the letter was burnt at her own request. I have, according to your desire, returned unto you your own letter."

⁶ Keith, p. 254.

⁷ Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 77.

⁸ Keith, p. 255, Mary to Elizabeth. Keith printed from a contemporary copy, which leaves the day of the month blank. The original is in the State-paper Office, dated 28th September 1564.

report; the house well hanged, two chambers very well furnished, one special rich and fair bed, where his lordship lieth himself, and a passage made through the wall to come the next way into court when he will. I see him honourably used of all men, and that the queen's self hath good liking of his behaviour. There dined with him the Earl of Athole, in whom he reposes singular trust, and they are seldom asunder, saving when the Earl of Lennox is at the sermon. [Athole was a Roman Catholic.] There was also his brother, the Bishop of Caithness, a Protestant, who sometimes preacheth. His lordship's cheer is great and his household many, though he hath despatched divers of his train away. He findeth occasion to disburse money very fast, and of his £700 brought with him, I am sure that much is not left. If he tarry long, Lennox may, perchance, be to him a dear purchase. He gave the queen a marvellous fair and rich jewell, whereof there is made no small account; a clock, and a dial curiously wrought and set with stones; and a looking-glass very richly set with stones, in the four metals; to my Lord of Lethington, a very fair diamond in a ring; to my Lord Athole, another, as also somewhat to his wife—I know not what: to divers others somewhat, but to my Lord of Moray nothing. He presented, also, each of the Marys with such pretty things as he thought fittest for them; such good means he hath to win their hearts, and to make his way to further effect. The bruit is here, that my lady herself, and my Lord Darnley are coming after, insomuch that some have asked me if she were upon the way. This I find, that there is here marvellous good liking of the young lord, and many that desire to have him here."¹

Whilst Lennox found himself thus happily restored after so long a banishment, and when Mary enjoyed the

satisfaction of extending to him her favour and forgiveness, Elizabeth's mind was torn with doubt and reduced to a state of the greatest perplexity. We learn this from the following remarkable letter written in her own hand to Cecil. This minister, her director in every difficulty, was then confined to his chamber by sickness, and the queen, snatching a sheet of paper, wrote to him these few lines in Latin:—"In ejusmodi laberintho posita sum de responso meo reddendo R. [reginæ] Scotiæ, ut nescio quomodo illi satisfaciam, quum neque toto isto tempore illi ullum responsum dederim, nec quid mihi dicendum nunc sciam. Invenias igitur aliquid boni quod in mandatis scriptis Randoll dare possem, et in hac causa tuam opinionem mihi indica."² This secret confession of the English queen is of much value in determining the truth. There is, we see, no accusation of the policy of Mary, or her ministers Moray and Lethington. Their open dealing upon the two great points of the marriage and the succession is virtually admitted. She complains that it had at last reduced her to a dilemma in which she knew not what to do or what to say, and throws upon Cecil the burden of finding, or inventing, some plausible apology which she may transmit by Randolph, then about to leave the English court for Scotland.

In the meantime the Scottish queen despatched Sir James Melvil, whom she had lately recalled from France, on a mission to Elizabeth. Melvil was an accomplished gentleman, who had been educated in the household of the Constable Montmorency; he was personally acquainted with most of the leading men in France and Ger-

² "I am involved in such a labyrinth regarding the reply to the letter of the Queen of Scots, that I know not how I can satisfy her, having delayed all this time sending her any answer, and now really being at a total loss what I must say. Find me out some good excuse, which I may plead in the despatches to be given to Randolph, and let me know your opinion in this matter." MS. State-paper Office, entirely in the queen's hand-writing, and thus backed by Cecil, "23d September 1564. At St James's, the queen writing to me, being sick."

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 24th October 1564. A long, minute, and most interesting letter, of which Keith, p. 259, had only seen a brief abstract in the Cotton Collection.

many; and being a Protestant, Mary believed he would be acceptable to her sister, and might do much to remove any unpleasant feelings which the late embarrassment regarding Lennox had occasioned between them. He was instructed to insinuate himself as much as possible into the confidence of the English queen; to mingle merry discourses with business, and gain her familiar ear; to discover, if possible, her real intentions and wishes on the subject of the marriage, and to keep a strict and jealous eye upon any measures which might be contemplated, regarding Mary's right of succession to the English crown.¹ On both points, he conducted the negotiation with success; and the account of it which he has left in his memoirs presents us with the best portrait of Elizabeth, "as a woman," that has ever been given. The English queen was much pleased with his lively and elegant manners, with his fund of court anecdotes, and the tone of gallantry and devotion with which he addressed her. She frequently sent for him three times a day, questioned him upon the beauty of his royal mistress as compared with her own, insisted on knowing which of them he found fairest, which the best shaped, and whether he liked her most when habited in the English, French, or Italian costume. On one occasion, taking him into her bed-chamber, and opening an escritoire, she shewed him some small miniatures, wrapped up in a paper, upon which the queen had written their names in her own hand. Taking one from among these, she kissed it and held it to Melvil: it was the picture of his royal mistress; and the gallant envoy, snatching Elizabeth's hand, who was not displeased with the familiarity, kissed it "for the love he saw she bore his queen." His eye then caught another on which was written "My Lord's Picture;" Elizabeth would have put it aside; it had been a present from her favourite Leicester; but Melvil earnestly begged a sight: she put it into his hand, and

he then playfully said, he would carry it to his own queen in Scotland. "Nay, I have but that one," said she. "True," he replied, "but your majesty possesses the principal," glancing his eye towards the earl, who stood talking to Secretary Cecil at the further end of the chamber.² During Melvil's stay at the English court, the Lord Robert Dudley, whom Elizabeth had proposed as a husband for Mary, was created Earl of Leicester with great solemnity; and at the inauguration, Lord Darnley, Lennox's eldest son, bore the sword, as nearest prince of the blood. The ceremony took place at Westminster, "herself," says Melvil, "helping to put on his ceremonial, he sitting on his knees before her, keeping a great gravity and discreet behaviour; but she could not refrain from putting her hand in his neck to kittle [tickle] him, smilingly — the French ambassador and I standing beside her. Then," he continues, "she asked me how I liked him. I said, as he was a worthy subject, he was happy in having encountered a princess that could discern and reward good service. 'Yet,' she said, 'ye like better yonder long lad,' pointing to Lord Darnley. My answer again was, that no woman of spirit would make choice of such a man, who was more like a woman than a man; for he was very lusty, beardless, and lady-faced."³ In this last sarcasm on Darnley's feminine appearance, the ambassador had an end in view. Mary had given him a secret commission to deal with Lady Lennox, that her son should pass into Scotland to see the country and visit his father, and he was anxious that Elizabeth should have no suspicion of any such overture on the part of the Scottish queen.³ During the nine days that he remained at the English court, Melvil continued to be treated with much confidence and familiarity. Elizabeth assured him that the subject of Mary's right to the succession of the crown of England, should be treated of in an approaching meeting of commissioners

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, Bannatyne edit., p. 112-114, inclusive.

² Melvil's Memoirs, Bannatyne edit., p. 122.

³ Ibid. p. 120.

from both countries, and declared her anxiety to declare her the second person in the realm, provided she listened to her advice on the subject of her marriage. She added, "that it was her own resolution at this moment to remain till her death a virgin queen, and that nothing would compel her to change her mind, except the undutiful behaviour of the queen her sister." Melvil smiled incredulously, and shook his head, observing, "that he knew she would never marry, because let Mary do what she would, the Queen of England had 'too stately a stomach' to suffer a commander;" adding, "you think if you were married, you would be only Queen of England, and now ye are king and queen both."¹ She earnestly wished she could see Mary. "Why should not your highness," said the ambassador, "disguise yourself as a page, and let me carry you secretly into Scotland; it would occupy but a few days, and for the time, it might be given out in the palace that you were sick and kept your chamber." "Alas," said the queen, much pleased with the romantic proposal, "would that it could be done!" When, some time after this, he begged to have his answer, that he might return home, she upbraided him with being sooner tired of her company than she was of his, and laid a little plot, by which he might be witness to her musical skill, and yet save her vanity from the appearance of a studied exhibition. Lord Hunsdon, after dinner, drew him aside to a quiet gallery, where he might hear some music, laying his finger on his mouth, and whispering that Elizabeth was playing on the virginals. The corridor was separated from the royal chamber only by a curtain, behind which Melvil listened for a while, then drawing it softly aside, and perceiving that her majesty's back was towards him, he slipt into the chamber, and heard her execute a piece admirably well. The queen, however, suddenly turned round, and running forward, as if ashamed, threatened to strike him with her left hand.

¹ Melvil's Memoirs Bannatyne edit n 122.

"She was not used," she said, "to play before men," and asked him, "how he came there." The ambassador did not find it difficult to appease the royal anger. "He was walking in the gallery," he said, "with Lord Hunsdon, when his ear was ravished with her melody, which drew him into the chamber he could scarcely tell how; he implored her pardon, but he had been brought up in a foreign court, where the manners were less grave than in England, and was ready to bear any punishment her highness chose to inflict." Elizabeth was much pleased, she sat down on a cushion, and when Melvil knelt beside her, asked him, whether she or Mary played best. He gave her the delight of hearing, that in music she excelled Mary, and she declared she would not let him away till he had seen her dance.²

On his return to Scotland the ambassador informed his mistress of Elizabeth's strong protestations of friendship and attachment, but being pressed by the Scottish queen to give his opinion of her sincerity, declared his conviction that she had little upright meaning; on the contrary, he had detected, he said, much dissimulation and jealousy: she had already hindered her marriage with the Archduke Charles, and she now offered Leicester, who was the last man she would part with.³ In the meantime Randolph, who for a considerable period had been resident at the English court, was despatched into Scotland with instructions to renew the proposals regarding Leicester; but his promises were so vague, and his answers, when pressed by Moray and Léthington, so obscure, evasive, and dilatory, that these ministers could arrive at no definite conclusion,⁴ and dreaded to commit themselves. A secret meeting was held between them and the Earl of Bedford at Berwick, but it led to no more satis-

² Melvil's Memoirs, p. 125.

³ Ibid. p. 129.

⁴ MS. Instructions, State-paper Office Draft by Cecil, 7th October 1564. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 4th Nov. 1564.

factory result.¹ Repeated conferences then took place with Randolph. This crafty and discerning envoy assured Cecil and his royal mistress, that although Mary was worn out with delays, and pressed by foreign suitors, and agitated by idle and malicious rumours arising from her remaining unmarried, still she continued to be animated by the same friendly feelings towards Elizabeth, she spoke of her with affection and respect, and seemed inclined to think her sincere regarding the marriage with Dudley.² Her ministers assured him, that if his royal mistress would perform their sole and simple request—if she would procure it to be declared by act of parliament, that Mary was next to herself in succession to the English crown, they would undertake to overthrow all foreign practices for her marriage, and accomplish the union with Leicester.³ That nobleman had in the meantime written such humble and flattering letters to Mary that she was much prepossessed in his favour; she shewed herself averse to the foreign offers made to her through her uncle the cardinal, and, judging impartially from the whole tenor of the negotiations, there seems little doubt that the Scottish queen, upon the conditions mentioned, would have agreed to marry Leicester.

On the 14th of December Randolph again wrote to Cecil; he referred to the letter lately addressed to this minister by Maitland and Moray, and he then observed, “The stay now standeth either in the queen’s majesty to have all this performed, or in his Lordship’s self, [Leicester,] that hath the matter so well framed to his hand, that much more, I believe, there need not be than his own consent, with that which may be for the queen’s majesty’s honour to do for him. It abideth now no longer deliberation.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 12th Nov. 1564.

² Ibid., 2d December 1564.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 3d December 1564, Moray and Lethington to Cecil. Also, Ibid., 24th December 1564. Moray and Lethington to Cecil.

You have the offer, you have the choice. . . . It is now looked for, that to the letter written to your honour there come a full and resolute answer.” He proceeds to enumerate the causes which move them thus earnestly to solicit an end. “Age,” says he, “time, necessity of her state, cempel her to marry; her people, her friends, press her thereunto. The offers made are such as not without good cause they can be refused, though some inconveniences may arise sooner in matching with one than with another; practices there are divers in hand.” Alluding to the two great suitors, Leicester and Darnley, of whose intended journey into Scotland many whispers now ran in the country, he observes:—“That which in this case is not a little to be considered, is, that I have inquired of themselves, and find it true by others, that there is no man for whom, hitherto, any suit hath been made to match with this queen, that shall be more grateful or more acceptable to the people, than shall be my Lord Robert. There hath been more thought of my Lord Darnley before his father’s coming than is at this present. . . . The father is now here well known; the mother more feared a great deal than beloved of any that knoweth her. To any other than yourself, if I should write in this sort, my wit would greatly fail me.”⁴ . . . These urgent requests of Randolph produced little effect. Cecil, completely under the control of his mistress, did not venture to move a step without her warrant, and as he

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 14th December 1564. He adds this sentence, which mentions a fact I have not elsewhere seen noticed, the influence which Lady Lennox had over the mind of Mary, queen of England:—“To think that Lord Darnley should marry this queen, and his mother to bear that stroke [have that influence] with her, that she bore with Queen Mary, (which she is like to do, as you can conjecture the causes why,) would alienate as many minds from the queen’s majesty, my sovereign, by sending home as great a plague into this country as that which, to her majesty’s great honour and perpetual love of the faithful and godly, she drove out of the same when the French were forced to retire themselves.”

found it impossible to induce her to make any special offer, or to consent to the demands of Mary's ministers, he was compelled to involve his answers in passages of such interminable length and obscure meaning, that, to use Randolph's phrase, "Lethington and Moray were worked up to great agonies and passions."¹ Nor was it wonderful it should be so. They had engaged in a perilous negotiation, on their sole responsibility; the queen their mistress, had intrusted them, indeed, with a general commission, but they had gone far beyond their instructions, and had expressed themselves in such terms as, if once discovered, must have brought them into immediate suspicion. In writing to Cecil they allude to *his* situation, as contrasted with *their own*, in the following remarkable passage:—"We immediately resolved to answer you without any drift of time, being more easy for us, for one respect, so to do, than it was for you to answer our former letter; forasmuch as *we* have none with whom we either dare or will communicate anything passed between us, and *you* were compelled to make your sovereign privy to our letter, before you might answer it. Truth it is, that in another point *you* have more advantage, in that you have a sufficient warrant for what you write, and so work surely, writing nothing but that your mistress both knoweth and doth allow; and we, without any commandment or warrant, write such things as, being brought to light, were sufficient matter to overthrow our credit at our sovereign's hand, and put all we have in danger. Although our conscience doth not accuse us that we intend any prejudice to her majesty, yet in princes' affairs, matters be as they list to take them; and it will not be allowed for a good reason, when they call their ministers to account, to say we meant well." "In your letter," they observe, "you have well provided that we shall find no lack for shortness thereof; yet, to speak squarely our opinion, we think

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 9th January 1564-5, Randolph to Cecil.

you could in fewer lines have comprehended matter more to our contentation; and better for furtherance of the purpose intended, if you had a sufficient warrant, and therewithal a mind to fall roundly to work with us. . . . When we came to those words—that seeing us mean to fall roundly to work, you will go also roundly to work with us, and proceed plainly—we looked for a plain resolution; but, having read over that which followed, you must bear with us if we find ourselves nothing satisfied: . . . for in that same plain speech, there be many obscure words and dark sentences, and, (pardon us that we say so,) in a manner, as many words as there be, as many ambiguities do result thereof."²

In the midst of these protracted negotiations, a parliament was held at Edinburgh, in which Mary fulfilled her promise to the Earl of Lennox. His forfeiture was reversed, his estates and honours restored, whilst the queen, to give the greater solemnity to this act of favour, came herself to the House, and in a short address informed the estates, that one of the chief causes which moved her to replace this baron in his former power and station, was the earnest suit of the queen, her good sister of England.³ At the same time the act against the mass was confirmed in all its severity. To be present at its celebration was made punishable by the loss of lands, goods, and even life, if the prince should think fit; nor were any exempted from the full penalties of the statute, except the queen and her household. This confirmation of a severe and unjust law might, at least, have convinced the more rigid Protestants that Mary remained true to the promise she had made on her first arrival; whilst her continued favour to Moray, and

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray and Lethington to Cecil, 24th December 1564.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 15th December 1564. His restoration was proclaimed with great solemnity by five heralds, at the cross, which was hung with tapestry, and surrounded by the lords sitting on horseback. Stevenson's Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary, p. 111.

the parliamentary sanction given to the late grant of his new earldom, manifested the sincerity of her dealing towards him to whom she committed the chief management of her affairs.

Shortly after this, the great affair of the marriage with Leicester seemed, from what cause is not easily discoverable, to assume a more decided form. Lethington thanked Cecil for a friendly and gentle letter, and rejoiced in the hopes it led him to entertain of the ultimate success of that good work which he had begun.¹ Mary also, who had retired for some time to St Andrews, to throw off the cares of state and the restraints and formalities of her court, received Randolph with expressions of unfeigned friendship and openness, declaring her determination, if Elizabeth agreed to the offer made by her ministers, to abide by her wishes, and to be guided by her instructions in all things. At first, indeed, she playfully refused to listen to any introduction of grave and weighty matters: it was, she said, her holiday time; she had thrown aside her pomp, and lived with a small train in a merchant's house at St Andrews, intent on nothing but to be quiet and happy. Randolph, however, was not to be thus put aside. He dined and supped with her every day, and at last ventured to speak of business. "I had no sooner spoken the word," says he, "but the queen said, 'I see now well that you are weary of this company and treatment. I sent for you to be merry, and to see how like a bourgeois wife I live, with my little troop, and you will interrupt our pastimes with your great and grave matters. I pray you, sir, if you be weary here, return home to Edinburgh, and keep your gravity and great embassade until the queen come thither, for I assure you, you shall not get her here; nor I know not myself where she is become. You see neither cloth of estate, nor such appearance, that you should think I am she at St Andrews that I was at Edinburgh.'—'I said,' (continues Randolph,) 'that I

was very sorry, for that at Edinburgh she said that she did love my mistress the queen's majesty better than any other, and now I marvelled how her mind was altered.'" Mary upon this became merry, and "called him by more names than were given him in his christendom." . . . "Well, sir," said she, "that which then I spoke in words shall be confirmed to my good sister your mistress in writing. Before you go out of this town you shall have a letter for her: and for yourself, go where you will, I care no more for you."² The next day he was commanded to be at the queen's table, and placed the next person (saving worthy Beaton)³ to Mary herself. After dinner she rode abroad, and it pleased her, most part of the time, to talk with him. As the queen's conversation at this ride was important, it is perhaps best to give it in her own words, as they were instantly afterwards reported to Elizabeth by Randolph himself. "She had occasion," says the ambassador, "to speak much of France, for the honour she received there to be the wife unto a great king, and for the friendship shewed unto her in particular by many, for which occasions she was bound to love the nation, to shew them pleasure, and do them good. Her acquaintance," she said, "was not so forgotten there, nor her friendship so little esteemed, but yet it was divers ways sought to be continued. She hath of her people many well affected that way, for the nurture they have had there, and the commodity of service, as those of the guard and men-at-arms; besides, great privileges for the merchants, more than ever were granted to any nation. What privately hath been sought (she continued, turning the discourse to her marriage) for a long time, and yet is sought, [namely,] that I should yield myself unto their desires in my marriage, your mistress cannot be

¹ Randolph to Elizabeth, 5th February 1564-5. Printed by Chalmers, *Life of Mary*, vol. i. p. 190, 8vo edition.

² Worthy Beaton was either Mary Beaton, one of her maids of honour, or Beaton, a gentleman mentioned afterwards at p.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 1st February 1564-5.

ignorant of it, and you have heard. To leave such friends, and to lose such offers, without assurance of as good, nobody will give me advice that loveth me. Not to marry, you know, it cannot be for me. To defer it long, many incommodes ensue; how privy to my mind your mistress hath been herein you know. How willing I am to follow her advice I have shewn many times, and yet I can find in her no resolution or determination. For nothing I cannot be bound unto her;¹ and I have of late given assurance to my brother of Moray, and Lethington, that I am loath to frame my will against hers, and so do now shew unto yourself, which I wish you to bear in mind, and to let it be known unto my sister, your mistress. And, therefore, this I say, and trust me, I mean it: if your mistress will (as she hath said) use me as her natural born sister or daughter, I will take [consider] myself either the one or the other, as she please, and will shew no less readiness to obey her, and honour her, than my mother or eldest sister; but if she will repute me always as her neighbour the Queen of Scots, how willing soever I be to live in amity, and to maintain peace, yet must she not look for that at my hands that otherwise I would or she desireth.² To forsake friendship offered, and present commodity [advantage] for uncertainty, no friend will advise me; nor if I did, would your mistress's self approve my wisdom. Let her, therefore, measure my case as her own, and so will I be hers. For these causes, until my sister and I have further proceeded, I must apply my mind to the advice of those that seem to tender most my profit, that shew their care over me, and wish me most good."

"I have disclosed to you," said she "all my mind, and require you to let it be known to your sovereign. My meaning unto her is plain, and so shall my dealing be. I know how

¹ She means, "I cannot be required to bind myself to Elizabeth, and get nothing in return."

² That is to say, "that she desires, and in other circumstances I would willingly give."

well she is worthy, and so do esteem her; and, therefore, I will say thus much more—that as there is none nearer of kin unto her than I am, nor none more worthy to whom I may submit myself, so is there none to whom with better will I desire to be beholden unto than unto her, or to do anything that may be with my honour."

In the midst of this discourse Mary stopt suddenly, protesting "that she had been drawn on to talk on a subject upon which she had hitherto kept to him a profound silence." Randolph admitted it to be so, but said he knew her mind from her ministers. "I charged them," rejoined the queen, "to consider what was best for me, and I find them bent towards you, and yet I believe they will advise the best; but your mistress may use me [so] that I will leave their advices, and follow hers alone." The ambassador earnestly trusted it might be so. "Remember, then, what I have said," continued the Scottish queen: "this mind cometh not upon the sudden; it is more than a day or two that I have had this thought, and more than this too, that you shall not know." "I desired her grace (proceeds Randolph) not to cut off her talk there, it was so good, so wise, so well framed, and so comfortable unto me, as nothing could be more, to hear that mind in her towards your majesty."

"I am a fool," said Mary, "thus long to talk with you; you are too subtle for me to deal with." Randolph protested upon his honesty, that his meaning was only to nourish a perpetual amity between his mistress and her, and that this could only be done by honest means. "How much better were it," said she, "that we two, being queens, so near of kin, neighbours, and living in one isle, should be friends, and live together like sisters, than by strange means divide ourselves to the hurt of us both. And to say that we may, for all that, live friends,³ we may say and promise what we will, but it

³ That is to say, "that nothing hinders us to live in friendship, continuing as we are now is vain. We may promise what we will, but we cannot perform it."

will pass both our powers. You repute us [Scots] poor, but yet you find us cumbersome enough. We have had loss—ye have taken skaith.¹ Why may it not be so between my sister and me, that we, living in peace and assured friendship, may give our minds, that some as notable things may be wrought by us women, as by our predecessors have been before. Let us seek this honour against some other [rather] than fall at debate among ourselves." "I asked her grace here," says Randolph, "whether she would be content one day, whenever it were, to give her assistance for the recovery of Calais?" At this question Mary laughed, and said, "Many things must pass between my good sister and me before I can give you answer; but I believe to see the day that all our quarrels shall be one; and assure you, if we be not, the fault shall not be in me." Randolph, encouraged by her frankness, pressed her to say "how she liked the suit of my Lord Robert Earl of Leicester, that he might write her opinion of him to Elizabeth."—"My mind towards him," replied Mary, "is such as it ought to be of a very noble gentleman, as I hear say by many; and such a one as the queen your mistress my good sister does so well like to be *her* husband, if he were not her subject, ought not to mislike me to be *mine*. Marry! what I shall do lieth in your mistress's will, who shall wholly guide me and rule me."²

Ten days after this letter was written, Henry Lord Darnley, having obtained the permission of Elizabeth, and with strong letters in his favour from Leicester and Sir William Cecil, repaired to Scotland. His avowed errand was to visit his father, and assist him in some private affairs which required the personal presence of the heir of his house;³ but there is no doubt that other and deeper schemes hung upon this journey. The Countess of Lennox, his mother, an ambitious

¹ Hurt.

² Chalmers's Life of Mary, vol. i. p. 190, from the original in the State-paper Office, Randolph to Elizabeth, 5th February 1564-5.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lennox to Cecil, 10th March 1564-5.

and intriguing woman, looked forward to his ingratiating himself with Mary; and Elizabeth, who dreaded lest her simulated offer of Leicester should involve her in difficulties, and compel her to part with her favourite, was no wise averse to make the Scottish queen acquainted with this young prince, who, next to herself, was the nearest heir to the English throne. He was received with much distinction by the Earl of Bedford, and having passed a night at Lethington, the seat of Secretary Maitland, arrived at Edinburgh, 12th February 1564-5.⁴ Having learnt that the queen was absent in Fife, he passed over the Firth, and was introduced to Mary at the castle of the Wemyss,⁵ where, during a short progress, she then resided. His reception was flattering; and his manners and address created a prepossession in his favour, not only amongst the Scottish courtiers, but in the more severe and sarcastic mind of Randolph the English ambassador. As he was aware that his sudden appearance in Scotland must draw the eyes of many upon him, it was his object to conciliate all parties. It was suspected that both his father and himself were Papists; but the young lord put himself under the guidance of Moray, and went to hear Knox preach. After the sermon they returned to the palace; he was introduced to the beauties of the court, and in the evening, at the suggestion of Moray, Darnley danced a galliard with the queen.⁶

But although whispers began to circulate regarding the motives which had brought him to Scotland, there can be no doubt that Mary and her ministers were still intent upon the matrimonial negotiation with England. At this moment she treated with great coldness the overtures of her uncle the Cardinal of Lorraine, who proposed to

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 12th February 1564-5.

⁵ Wemyss castle, on the shore of the Firth of Forth, in Fife.

⁶ His courteous dealing with all men deserved great praise, and is well spoken of.—MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Leicester, 19th February 1564-5. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 27th February 1564-5.

procure a papal dispensation for her marriage with the King of France.¹ It was even surmised that she was becoming more open to conviction on the subject of religion; and Randolph playfully accused her of beginning to savour of the Huguenots, requesting her to take counsel of his sovereign. "This must be," said Mary, "when I come to England;" alluding to their long-intended interview. The ambassador asked when that would be. "Whenever your mistress wishes it," was the answer; "and as to marriage, my husband must be such a one as she will give me." He alluded to Leicester. "Of that matter," she replied, "I will say no more till I see greater likelihood; but no creature living shall make me break more of my will than my good sister, if she will use me as a sister; if not, I must do as I may."²

Whilst Mary was thus open and candid with the English ambassador, Moray, in still more urgent terms, implored him to bring matters to a conclusion, and persuade his royal mistress to acknowledge Mary's title, and expedite the marriage with Leicester. If this took place, he was content, he said, to lose (as he must do) much of his power and honour, for the satisfaction of having discharged his duty; but if he failed in this, it was almost certain ruin. (The queen would dislike and suspect him, because he had deceived her with promises which he could not realise; he was the counsellor and deviser of that line of policy which, for the last five years, had been pursued towards England; he it was that had induced her to defer to Elizabeth, to desert her ancient friends, to renounce every foreign offer. "If," said he, "she marry any other than Leicester, what mind will the new king bear me, that knoweth I have so strongly opposed his advancement? If he be a Papist, either we must obey, or fall into new misery and difficulty, whilst I shall be regarded as the ring-leader of the discontented. But what

need to say more of this, you have often heard me say as much before; and yet we see nothing but drift of time, delays from day to day, to do all for nothing and to get nothing for all."³ In the same spirit, Lethington besought Cecil to act with more stoutness and courage, and bring the matter to a conclusion. Elizabeth had described the Scottish ministers as transforming the negotiation too much into a matter of bargain. "They looked," she said, "for her death, and hunted after a kingdom;" whilst she jocularly told Melvil that Maitland, in his constant allusions to the succession, was, like a death-watch, ever ringing her knell in her ears. The secretary ably repelled this unworthy notion. "In good faith," said he, "that is not my mistress' meaning. Rather doth she seek, and we also, a probable reason to lay against the objections which shall be made in foreign nations contrary to this match; that they may see it is no vain or light conceit hath moved her to yield to the Queen of England's request in her marriage. . . . The matter itself hath not so many difficulties, but you may soon remove them all if you list."⁴ In a later letter, he eloquently alludes to the honour which would redound to Cecil and himself, if their measures to promote the union of the two kingdoms by this marriage were at last successful. Such a stroke of policy, he remarked, would secure for them a more glorious memory, a more unfading gratitude in the ages to come, than belonged to those "who did most valiantly serve King Edward the First in his conquest, or King Robert the Bruce in his recovery of the country."⁵

These fond anticipations of present felicity and posthumous honour were not destined to be realised. It became at last necessary for Elizabeth to

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 4th March 1564-5. This conversation with Randolph took place at a dinner at the Earl of Moray's, where none were present but the countess his wife, and Pitarow the comptroller.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, Christmas-day 1564.

³ Ibid., 1st February 1564 5.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 4th March 1564-5.

² Ibid.

come to a decision ; and Randolph was instructed to impart to the Scottish queen her final resolution. It amounted to a peremptory and mortifying denial of every proposal of her ministers. She refused to recognise Mary's title, or to adopt any measures regarding her right of succession, till she had made up her own mind whether she would marry or not.¹ If Mary chose to accept Leicester as a simple earl, and trust to the after munificence of the English queen, she would not have any reason to repent her confidence; but this was the same vague and delusive expectation so long held out, which seemed to promise all, and actually meant nothing. The message of Elizabeth, in short, at once put an end to all negotiation. When Randolph communicated her letter to the Scottish queen, it was evident to him that she was deeply moved, and he heard afterwards that their interview had been followed by a passionate fit of weeping.² Lethington at once declared, that after such a communication no one could honestly advise Mary to delay ; and Moray, who seemed deeply disappointed, prognosticated a speedy dissolution of all friendship between the two queens. His knowledge of the character of his royal mistress led him to this conclusion. It was Mary's weakness to be hurried away by the predominating influence of some one feeling and object. Warm, generous, and confiding, but, at the same time, ambitious and tenacious of her rights, it had been her favourite and engrossing object for the last four years to prevail upon Elizabeth to recognise her title to the English throne. With this view she had given credit to her professions, borne every delay with patience, checked the advances of foreign suitors, treated her nearest relatives with coldness, and promoted to the highest offices of wealth and power those of her nobles who were most attached to England. Everything had been sacrificed to an imprudent dependence upon the promises of Eliza-

beth. Almost to the very last she hoped against hope, and shewed an affection which, to the piercing and suspicious eyes of Randolph, was sincere and unequalled.³ Are we to wonder that, when she suddenly was awakened to the duplicity with which she had been treated ; when, in a moment, the mask of pretended amity and affection, so long worn by the English queen, fell to the ground, and the features of fraud, falsehood, and selfishness came out in all their deformity, Mary recoiled with mortification and disgust ? Her confidence had been abused ; she was the dupe of successful artifice ; she might soon be the victim of intrigues of which she knew not the ramifications and extent. Can we be surprised that, under this state of mind, the reaction was immediate and violent ? (She had long submitted her opinion to others ; she now determined to choose for herself.) The influence of her uncles and of the court of Rome had been for years on the wane ; she was not indisposed now to see it revived. The Protestant nobility and the reformed clergy had been treated ever since her arrival in her dominions with high favour, and the great body of her subjects, who adhered to the ancient faith, were kept under and neglected ; it was right now that the balance should be held with a more equal hand between them. Moray had been chosen by her as her chief minister and adviser since she left France ; to him she had committed almost regal powers ; she had pardoned his rebellion, had accumulated upon him estates and honours, and placed him at the very head of her nobles ; she had committed herself to his guidance, it was by his advice she had shaped her policy towards England, it was the road marked out for her by him and Lethington that had led her on to mortification, insult, and defeat. Was it possible that she could continue to those two men the confidence with which she had formerly regarded them ? was it unnatural that, when she discovered their entire de-

¹ Keith, p. 270.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 17th March 1564-5.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 15th March 1564-5.

votedness to Elizabeth, she should begin to consider them as merely instruments in her hands, and regard them with suspicion and resentment? Yet, although these feelings must at this moment have influenced her secret resolutions, it was the unhappiness of Mary to be surrounded by those whom she could not trust, or to whom she dared not give power. Had she selected as her counsellors any of the wisest amongst the Roman Catholic clergy, the measure would have been probably met by an instantaneous rising of the people and the reformed preachers; whilst her nobility, alike Catholic and Protestant, had successively shewn themselves venal, selfish, and treacherous. She was compelled, therefore, to temporise and conciliate; and when we consider the fearful elements by which she was surrounded—craft, cruelty, fanaticism, in their worst shapes,—all the fierce and uncontrollable passions which marked a feudal age, and much of the refined vices which her subjects had imported in a lengthened and constant intercourse with France and the Continent—it is difficult to withhold our pity from this still youthful queen, placed without advisers in a situation of such peril and responsibility.

It was necessary, however, to come to a determination. Mary had resolved already on a speedy marriage, and her mind naturally turned to Darnley. His descent was royal, his grandmother being the sister of Henry the Eighth, and his mother cousin-german to Queen Elizabeth.¹ At the installation of Lord Robert Dudley as Earl of Leicester, the reader may remember that Sir James Melvil saw Darnley, as first prince of the blood, bear the sword of state before the queen.² His own title to the throne of England was second only to that of the Queen of Scotland; he bore the royal name, and by a marriage with

him she believed that she would secure to their children an undoubted and unchallengeable title to the English crown. He was now in his nineteenth year; his conduct since his arrival in Scotland, if we may believe Randolph, (a witness whose feelings against him gives weight to his praise,) had been prudent and popular.³ He had come to the Scottish court not only with the full approbation, but with the warm recommendation of Elizabeth;⁴ and this queen had repeatedly assured Mary that, although she decidedly opposed her marriage to a foreign prince, she might choose any of her English nobility, and be certain of her approbation. When, therefore, she selected Darnley, the Scottish queen had reason to expect the approval of Elizabeth, and, if we except Knox and his party, the concurrence and support of all classes in the state. Nor, although Lennox and his son were both suspected of being Papists, could Mary augur that the English queen would be much dissatisfied on that account. At this very moment a negotiation was suspected to be carrying on for a marriage between England and France. Elizabeth, it was reported at the Scottish court, was every day manifesting a greater favour for the ceremonies of the Roman Church; she had determined to impose upon the English clergy a particular habit, copied from that worn by the clergy of the Church of Rome. She had publicly reproved a preacher, desiring him to return to his text or to hold his peace; she had been seen to wear a rosary and a crucifix; and Bonner had affirmed, with impunity, that there was not one real bishop in England.⁵ All this held out encouragement to Mary. It was soon manifest that her choice was fixed on Darnley; and in a dangerous and infectious illness which seized him about

¹ Darnley stood in the relation of cousin to Mary—though by the half-blood only. His mother, the Countess of Lennox, was daughter of Archibald Earl of Angus by the widow of James the Fourth, consequently half-sister of James the Fifth, Mary's father.

² Supra, p. 182.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 27th February 1564-5.

⁴ Ibid., Bedford to Cecil, 11th February 1564-5.

⁵ MS. Letter State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 30th March 1565.

this time, she attended him in person with the utmost care, earnestness, and affection, sitting up with him till midnight, watching his convalescence, and shewing delight at his recovery.¹ In a sister to a favourite brother such devotedness would have been commendable; in a queen to her subject, and still more in an affianced mistress to her future husband, it was undignified and indecorous, and gave a handle to the injurious constructions of her enemies. But it was the misfortune of her ardent disposition that she was always under the domination of some strong and engrossing feeling, which sometimes led her to disregard appearances, and to believe she could never sacrifice enough for the object of her approval; nor did she think of the miserable effects of such flattery and attention upon the youth who was exposed to it. To be thus cherished by a queen, and the most beautiful woman in Europe—by her for whose hands so many kings and princes had sued; to have love, honour, and power soliciting his acceptance; to be raised from a subject to supreme command, and to find a crown dropping on his head, would have been trying to the best balanced and the firmest mind. Are we to wonder that, on the weak and unstable disposition of Darnley, it operated with fatal and most instantaneous effect? He became proud and overbearing; and, treating the ancient nobility with neglect, attached himself principally to Riccio, the queen's secretary for her French correspondence, an Italian, who, being first introduced into the royal household as a musician, had been promoted to this office in consequence of the disgrace of Raulet, her former French secretary.² He began also to shew symptoms of a passionate and unmanageable temper; talked with great imprudence of the strong party he had in England;³ declared

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford to Cecil, 23d April 1565.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, March 4, 1564-5. Ibid., same to same, 15th January 1564-5.

³ Ibid., 21st May 1565. Also, Ibid. MS. Letter, same to same, 3d May 1565.

openly that Moray's power was exorbitant and dangerous; and made himself in a short time so many enemies, that it was whispered he must soon either change his conduct or lose his life.⁴ Nor were the consequences of this extraordinary favour shewn to Lennox and his son less injurious in other quarters. Those who knew best the disposition of the queen began to dread that these nobles would wrest from her the whole power in the state, and that she would herself become nothing but a passive instrument in effecting their purposes of ambition and agrandisement. The Duke of Chastelherault, under whose regency Lennox had been banished and forfeited, anticipated the total ruin of his house: the party of the Protestants, led by Knox and the preachers, cried out "that they were undone." Moray, with the design of strengthening his faction, but under colour of his aversion to the Popish ceremonies, retired from court; and Randolph reported that the people were universally discontented,⁵ whilst he hinted, that if Elizabeth felt herself disposed to raise factions in Scotland, and embroil that country, there never was a fitter time to carry her wishes into execution.⁶ Even this was not all. Many brought an accusation against Elizabeth, from which her minister found it difficult to defend her. It was affirmed that she had herself sent Darnley into Scotland with a purpose to bring about the very events which had occurred; that her object was to hinder any potent foreign alliance; to match the queen meanly, and to interrupt the friendly intercourse between the two kingdoms.⁷

In the midst of these unpleasant

⁴ Randolph to Cecil, 20th March 1564-5, printed in Keith, p. 274. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 3d June 1565.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 17th March 1564-5. Also, same to same, MS. Letter, State paper Office, 18th April 1565. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford to Cecil, 28th April 1565.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 15th April 1565.

⁷ Ibid., 18th April 1565.

rumours and surmises, Mary despatched Lethington to the English court, with injunctions to communicate her resolution regarding Darnley, and to use all his influence to procure the approbation of the queen. He arrived at Westminster on the 18th of April, and, as he had anticipated, found Elizabeth not only hostile to the projected alliance, but expressing herself with much bitterness against the Scottish queen. She submitted the proposal to her Privy-council; and, after long deliberations, they declared themselves unanimously opposed to it, pronouncing the measure "prejudicial to both the queens, and consequently dangerous to the weal of both countries."¹ What these dangers were the councillors did not think proper to describe; nor do we learn from any contemporary letters that Lethington exerted his ingenuity to dissipate this alarm.

In the meantime, during his absence, some important events were taking place in Scotland. Bothwell, the mortal enemy of Moray, returned suddenly from France; but the suspicions of treason under which he lay, and the reports which had reached the queen's ears of his abandoned and profligate character, induced her to treat him with the utmost severity.² The Earl of Moray, whose life he had repeatedly threatened, demanded justice; and Mary summoned him to stand his trial for high treason in conspiring with the Earl of Arran, three years before, to seize the person of the queen. These events were communicated by Randolph to Cecil, in this graphic and interesting letter, from which (although coloured with his own views and prejudices) we may understand something of the state of parties in Scotland. He first alludes to the expected trial of Bothwell:—"Upon Tuesday, at night, (the 1st of May,) there came to this town my Lords of Moray and Argyle, to keep the day of law against the Earl Bothwell, who appeared not, nor is it yet for certain

¹ 1st May 1565. Keith, pp. 270, 274, 275.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford to Cecil, 24th March 1564-5.

known what is become of him, though the common report is, that he embarked at North Berwick. The company that came to this town in favour of my Lord of Moray are esteemed five or six thousand; and for my part, I assure your honour, I never saw a greater assembly. More also had come, saving that they were stayed by the queen, who hath shewed herself now of late to mislike that my Lord of Moray so earnestly pursueth him, [Bothwell,] and will not give his advice to take the like advantage upon some others, whom she beareth small affection unto.

"In this matter thus far they have proceeded. Upon Wednesday he was called, and for lack of appearance was condemned in the sum; farther, the queen would not that the justice-clerk should proceed, which hath bred so much misliking, and given occasion of such kind of talk against her grace, for bearing with such men in her own cause,³ that that which is already spoken passeth all measure."

This was an unfair representation of Randolph. The queen, instead of shewing good will to Bothwell, was strongly prejudiced against him; and, in consequence of his coarse and violent conduct, had recently declared he should never receive favour at her hands.⁴ As to the accusation of a conspiracy, it may be remembered that Arran, when he made the disclosure, 31st March 1562,⁵ was mad; he then implicated not only Bothwell, but his own father, and had continued insane ever since. What evidence Moray had collected during the lapse of nearly three years we cannot tell; but as this potent accuser came to attend the trial with an army of five thousand men, Bothwell justly considered that his life would be in danger if he appeared, and sent his kinsman, Hep-

³ In an affair where the crown was prosecutor. See the Summons of Treason. Pitcairn, Criminal Trials, vol. i. p. 462.*

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 30th March 1564-5. Bothwell had used coarse and scandalous epithets in speaking of the queen herself; so Randolph affirms in this letter.

⁵ Supra, p. 161.

burn of Whitsum, to protest his innocence, and to declare his readiness to answer the charge when made quietly, without tumult or intimidation.¹

The ambassador proceeds to notice the obstinacy of the queen, the discontent of her subjects, and the threatenings which began to circulate, "that if good advice was despised, remedy must be sought by sharper means." "This," he continues, "is not the voice of one or two; they are not the meanest that spake it, nor the unlikeliest to put it in execution, if that way they go to work. I write that but shortly, which in many words and by many men I have heard. . . . The speech of this marriage to any of them all, as divers ways I have attempted to know their mind, is so much contrary to their desires that they think their nation dishonoured, the queen shamed, and country undone."

"A greater plague to herself and them there cannot be—a greater benefit to the queen's majesty could not have chanced than to see this dis honour fall upon her, and to have her so matched as it shall pass her power at any time to attain unto that which hitherto so earnestly she looked for. . . . She is now, to be short, almost in utter contempt of her people, and so far herself in doubt of them, that without some speedy redress worse is to be feared. Many grievous and sore words have of late escaped her against the duke. Mortally she hateth my Lord of Argyle; and so far suspecteth my Lord of Moray, that, not many days since, she said 'that she saw whereabout he went, and that he would set the crown upon his own head.' How these men have need to look unto themselves your honour doth perceive.

"To this point it is come, that my Lord of Moray and Argyle will at no time be in the court together, that, if need be, the one may relieve or support the other. The duke is content to live at home, and thinketh himself happy if he may die in his bed. The preachers look daily, by some means or other, to have their lives taken

from them, or to be commanded to silence, as already she hath done one—Mr Thomas Drummond, a godly and learned young man, that preached at Dunblane.

"With my Lord of Argyle there came to this town the Lord David, the duke's son, with most part of the duke's friends. Assured bands and promises are made between the duke and Lord of Moray, that nothing shall be attempted against each other but it shall be defended to the uttermost of their powers. The Earl of Glencairn having been required by the Earl of Lennox to enter into the like band, hath refused it, and joined with the duke. My Lord of Morton this time was absent, but so disliked, that I have not heard any man worse spoken of. He is now in hopes that my Lady's Grace [the Countess of Lennox] will give over her rights of Angus, and so [he] will become friend to that side. In this Lethington laboureth, not much to his own praise. The Lord Ruthven, Lethington's chief friend, is wholly theirs, and chief counsellor amongst them. Suspicions do rise on every side, in which I have my part, as of late, because I was at the west Border, and am thought to practice with the Master of Maxwell—I know not what myself. My Lord of Moray was willed not to have to do with me; and when he said 'he could not choose but speak well of me'—'Well,' saith she, [the queen,] 'if you will, let not Argyle have to do with him'—for all that I have supped twie with my Lord of Moray. My Lord of Argyle took the pains to come to my lodging: he brought with him the Lord David. He hath been plain, and, to be short, misliketh all. . . . The country is now so far broken, that there is daily slaughter, without redress, between the Scots and Elliots—stealing at all hands, and justice almost nowhere.

"Now, touching Mr Fowler, [the confidential servant of Lennox,] he came, as I wrote, upon Saturday at night, late. He communed long that night with the queen and his lordship, and brought her grace a letter of five

¹ Pitcairn, vol. i. p. 464.*

or six sheets of paper, all in cipher, from the Lord of Lethington. Thus much is known, that the queen's majesty hath an utter misliking of the matter. What else is contained in the same letter, few, I believe, will come by the knowledge. Part of it was shewn to my Lord of Moray; the rest, at his departure from her grace, was not deciphered. Fowler hath reported that the queen's majesty [Elizabeth] should say openly that she had no liking of the matter, and that if it took effect, then the duke should be put down within one month after, and the good Protestants driven out of the country, which she would not suffer. These words are now in many men's mouths, and many glad to hear it, and believe it the better because that he doth report it.

"Through this, and somewhat else that I have spoken, many are now well satisfied of the queen's majesty that he was not sent hither for any such purpose as now undoubtedly shall take effect. Whatsoever may be borne in hand, that it shall no farther than the queen's majesty's will is, and doth assent to, I know it already past that point. It may be said that my Lord of Moray may be the doer and the contriver thereof, which I know to be otherwise, for if that had been, he would not have refused to have been present at the assurance and contract making. I know much more than this, but I trust this will suffice you for that part.

"What practices are in hand, or how long this matter hath been a brewing, I know not; but this I know hath been said by the father, that he is sure of the greatest part in England, and that the King of Spain will be his friend. If this be their fetch, your honour knoweth what time it is to look about you. How little is to be feared from hence, and what her power is at this time, she standing in such terms as she doth, your honour is not ignorant of.

"It is feared that her majesty [Elizabeth] will over soon allow hereof, and over hastily accord unto this queen's desire; at least, it is wished

that there may be some open show of her majesty's discontentment. Lethington is suspected to favour more that way (I mean to my Lord Darnley) than he would seem; and yet, I assure you, he is scarcely trusted amongst them, [Lennox's party,] and of late despiteful words have been spoken against him, upon certain words which he wrote to my Lord Moray, that he should persuade the queen to make no haste in the matter, but keep it in the stay it was when he left it.

"The chief dealers in these matters are David Riccio, the Italian; Mingo, valet-de-chambre; Athole and Ruthven, whom I should have named first.

"Thus your honour seeth our present estate, and how things do frame amongst us. So much pride, such excess in vanities, so proud looks and despiteful words, and so poor a purse I never heard of. My Lord of Lennox is now quite without money; he borrowed five hundred crowns of my Lord of Lethington, and hath scarcely enough now to pay for his horse meat; if he have no more from you, we shall see him presently put to his shifts. His men are bolder and saucier, both with the queen's self and many noblemen, than ever I thought could have been borne: divers of them now resort to the mass, and glory in their doings. Such pride is noted in the father and the son, that there is almost no society or company amongst them. My young lord, lying sick in his bed, hath already boasted the duke to knock his pate when he is whole. . . .

"I write these things with more sorrow and grief of mind than in any passion or affection to any part, [farther] than that I am desirous that the work wherein I have been a labourer, almost six years, with care, sorrow, and greater burden than I have been able to bear, which is to maintain a perfect amity between my native country and this, should not be overthrown and quite destroyed, nor that the good-will which my mistress hath gotten through her deserts amongst

this people, should here take an end when most desired, and most earnestly looked for. Before, she was their friend against foreign nations; now the danger is as great at home. Other refuge they have none—to none more willing to obey, and of her majesty alone they desire support. Counsel is now more worth than men or money.

"This day [Thursday, 3d May] the chief of the Protestants that at this time are present with the ministers assembled in the Church. Consultation was had what order might be put unto that confusion that had grown up, wherein every man might do and say what he would without reproof against God's glory and His Word. Their deliberations contained three heads. First, how to remove idolatry out of the realm, containing in that as well the queen's chapel as others; next, that her own laws might be put in execution without offence; the third, that liberty might be granted, without inhibition or reproof, to such as are admitted to preach the true Word of God. Long reasoning hath been hereupon. It was determined that the request should be put in writing, and certain appointed as messengers for the rest. More hereof your honour shall know hereafter."¹

In perusing this letter, we must beware of giving implicit confidence to the representations of Randolph. The picture it conveys of universal discontent, and the symptoms of rising wrath and incipient rebellion which it describes, were coloured highly to suit the purposes of this crafty minister and to favour the views of the English faction. The duke, Moray, and Argyle, with Knox, and all, or the greater portion of the Protestants, were, no doubt, violently opposed to the marriage, and had already adopted precautions, not only for their own defence, but had begun to repeat the same game which they had already played so successfully. They had solicited Randolph to procure for them the support and coun-

tenance of the English queen, and had declared their readiness to rise in arms against their sovereign. All this was true; but when this minister asserted that the union with Darnley was odious to the whole nation, when he represented the queen as having fallen into universal contempt, and when he described the lives of the Protestant preachers as being in danger from the measures adopted against them, he stated what was contradicted by subsequent events, and even disproved by his own letters. It was soon seen that Mary, if she had some enemies, had also many powerful friends. Besides Lennox and his son, now restored to their estates and, with their lands, to great feudal strength, she could reckon firmly on the support of the Earls of Athole and Caithness, the Lords Hume and Ruthven, with the Lord Robert, and all the ancient barons and families who were still secretly attached to the Catholic religion.² It was surmised, also, that Lethington, whose counsel and experience were of such value to any party which he cordially embraced, would be unwilling to declare openly against her; and the mind of the queen herself, far from being overwhelmed by the difficulties which surrounded her, seemed to gain energy by the struggle, and led her to act with a promptitude, spirit, and vigour for which her opponents were not prepared.

Before, however, she proceeded to more decisive measures, she resolved to make a last attempt to gain Moray, and obtain his consent to her marriage with Darnley. He was flattered and caressed, both by the queen and the Earl of Lennox, but to little effect. Mary then seizing a moment when he was off his guard, and in Lord Darnley's chamber, took him aside and placed a paper in his hands, to which she required him to put his name. It contained an approval of her marriage, and an engagement to promote it with his whole power; and this she insisted he should consent to, as he would shew himself her faithful subject, and avoid her displeasure. Moray firmly,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 3d May 1565.

² Keith, p. 272.

but respectfully declined. "Her resolution," he said, "was over-hasty, and her demand upon him too sudden and peremptory. What would foreign princes think of such precipitation? What must be the opinion of the Queen of England, with whom her ambassador was even then in treaty, and whose answer she daily expected? But most of all," he said, "he would be loath to consent to the marriage of any one of whom there was so little hope that he would be a favourer of Christ's true religion, which was the thing most to be desired: of one who hitherto had shewn himself rather an enemy than a preserver of the same."¹ Indignant and surprised at this refusal, Mary remonstrated, entreated, and even threatened: but all was to no purpose. To her "many sore words," he replied with great calmness and humility, yet he continued firm in his resolution, and was dismissed from the presence of his sovereign with a bitter accusation of ingratitude, and expressions of her high resentment.

This interview occurred on the 8th of May, and the queen summoned a convention of her nobility to meet at Stirling on the 15th of the same month. Her object was to obtain their consent to her marriage previous to the return of Lethington with the answer of Elizabeth; and to accomplish this, she despatched Beaton, a gentleman in whom she had much confidence, with new instructions to be delivered to her secretary. They were drawn up in terms very different from his first commission. Mary commanded him to return to the Queen of England, and declare unto her, that, since she had been so long trained with fair speeches, and in the end beguiled of her expectation, she had now resolved, with the advice of the estates of her realm, to use her own choice in her marriage, and to select such a one as in her opinion should be most worthy of the honour to which he was to be raised. The letter which contained these instructions was written wholly by herself. "It wanted,"

says Throckmorton, who had seen the original, "neither eloquence, despite, anger, love, nor passion,"² and was evidently dictated by a keen feeling of the ingratitude, duplicity, and selfishness with which she had been treated by Elizabeth. He was also directed, after he had finished his negotiation in England, to pass over to France, and use his influence there to procure from the French king and that court an approval of her choice. To induce her secretary to enter cordially into her views, Mary at the same time wrote to him with her own hand "the most favourable and gentle letter that ever queen did address to her servant." She sent him also a bill of credit, on the receivers of her dowry in France, empowering him to draw for any sum he pleased, and, in the event of his success in this mission, promised him the highest preferment which it was in her power to bestow.³

Before, however, her messenger could reach London, Lethington had left that city on his return, and Elizabeth had despatched Sir Nicholas Throckmorton (her late ambassador in France) on a mission to Scotland. He was instructed to communicate to the Scottish queen the resolution of the English Privy-council, to notify her entire disapproval of her union with Darnley, and to take measures to prevent its precipitate consummation. When on the way to the English court, Beaton encountered Lethington near Newark, and communicated his message to the Scottish secretary. Nothing can more strikingly shew the treachery of Mary's ministers, and the entire licence they assumed of disobeying, when it was convenient for them, the commands of their sovereign, than Lethington's conduct on this occasion. He heard the message, received the queen's letters, put them in his pocket, refused alike to return to London or to pass into France, and posting forward with all speed, overtook Throckmorton at Alnwick. Here he basely communicated to him the secret in-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 8th May 1565.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Cecil and Leicester, 11th May 1565.

³ Ibid.

structions he had received, and breaking into expressions of extreme rage and indignation towards his royal mistress, regretted that the English ambassador was not empowered to denounce war against her in case she resolved to proceed in this marriage with those whom he denominated the rebels of the English queen.¹ The two ambassadors then pursued their journey towards Scotland in company. "He was enjoined," said Throckmorton, (speaking of Lethington, and writing to Leicester and Cecil,) "to stay me, that I should not come into Scotland, and contrary to that, he will not go without me."² Are we to wonder that, when Mary's affairs were managed by such men, she was anxious to change her counsellors, and to seek for fidelity in another faction.

In the meantime the convention of the nobility which had been summoned to deliberate upon the marriage assembled at Stirling on the 15th May. It was most numerously attended, and included, with the exception of Lord Ochiltree, and a few others, the whole of the most influential nobles in the kingdom. There were present the duke, with the Earls of Argyle, Moray, Morton, Glencairn, Athole, Crawford, Eglinton, Cassillis, Rothes, and Caithness. The Lords Hume, Gray, Glammis, Borthwick, Yester, Fleming, Livingston, Semple, Ross, Lindsay, Lovat, Boyd, and Somerville. Besides these, there were the Officers of State, including the Secretary, the Justice-clerk, the Treasurer, and the Advocate, with the Commendators³ of Holyrood, Kilwinning, Jedburgh, St Colm's Inch, and Balmerinoch.⁴ At this solemn assembly of her nobles, the queen announced her intention of marrying Darnley, and the measure was approved of without a dissentient voice. Moray and his faction, whose real sentiments were strongly hostile to such a proceeding, appear to have

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Cecil and Leicester, 11th May 1565.

² Ibid.

³ A commendator was any clergyman who held a vacant benefice till it was provided with a sufficient pastor.

⁴ Keith, p. 277.

been overawed into a temporary consent, whilst the great majority of her barons admitted its expediency, and advised that it should be carried into effect.⁵ Thus confirmed in her purpose, Mary on the same day conferred the honour of knighthood upon Darnley, and immediately after created him Lord of Ardmanach and Earl of Ross. He then took the oaths, was girt with the sword, and, on rising from his knees before the queen, himself bestowed the dignity of knighthood upon fourteen gentlemen of ancient and loyal families who knelt before the throne.⁶ In the midst of these proceedings, word was brought that Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, ambassador of the queen of England, was then at the gate of the castle, and urgently demanded an audience. On being admitted, he delivered in strong language the remonstrance of his royal mistress: he expressed her surprise at the unadvised proceedings of the Scottish queen; and complained loudly of the presumption of Lennox and Darnley, her own subjects, who, without giving her any previous notice, had dared to engage in such an enterprise. To this Mary replied with great calmness and dignity. She said, "That as soon as she had formed her resolution on the subject of her marriage, she had communicated her intentions to Elizabeth, which was all that she had ever promised to do. As to her good sister's great dislike to the match," she observed sarcastically, "that this was indeed a marvellous circumstance, since the selection was made in conformity to the queen's wishes, as communicated by Mr Randolph." She had rejected all foreign suitors, and had chosen an Englishman, descended from the blood-royal of both kingdoms, and the first prince of the blood in England; and one whom she believed would, for these reasons, be acceptable to the subjects of both realms."⁷

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 11th May 1565.

⁶ Keith, pp. 276, 280, inclusive. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 21st May 1565.

⁷ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 21st May 1565, printed in Keith, p. 278.

It was difficult for the ambassador to answer this temperate remonstrance, which he knew to be founded in truth; and as the queen treated him with much courtesy, and agreed to postpone the ceremony of creating Darnley Duke of Albany till she heard again from Elizabeth, he judged it right neither to push matters to an extremity nor to hold out any encouragement to her discontented nobles.

The English queen, however, resorting to severer and more decided measures, ordered Lady Lennox into custody, having suspected her of intriguing with the Earl of Northumberland, and other leaders of the papists in England. At the same time, she again (12th June 1565) submitted to her Privy-council the question of the marriage of the Scottish queen. Their decision, as it is preserved in the original draft by Cecil, is of much importance in the light it throws on the state of parties in England. Two questions were propounded to the council :—1st, What perils might ensue to the queen's majesty and her realm upon the marriage of the Queen of Scotland with Lord Darnley? 2d, What was meet to be done to avoid the same? “The perils,” says Cecil in his minute of what took place, “being sundry and very many, were reduced by some councillors to only two :—1st, That by this marriage, the queen's majesty being unmarried, a great number in this realm, not of the worst subjects, might be alienated in their minds from their natural duties to her majesty, to depend upon the success of this marriage of Scotland as a mean to establish the succession of both the crowns in the issue of the same marriage, and to favour all devices and practices that should tend to the advancement of the Queen of Scots.”

“Under the second peril it was observed, that, considering the chief foundation of that [party] which favoured the marriage with the Lord Darnley was laid upon the trust of such as were papists, as the only mean left to restore the religion of Rome, it was plainly to be seen that, both in this

realm and in Scotland, the papists would most favour, maintain, and fortify the marriage of the Lord Darnley; and would, for furtherance of their faction in religion, devise all means and practices that could be within this realm to disturb the estate of the queen's majesty and the peace of the realm, and consequently to achieve their purpose by force rather than fail.”

The paper proceeds to point out, by way of warning to Elizabeth, that when Mary's power was the greatest—namely, during her marriage with the dauphin—she evinced her real mind to dispossess that princess of her title, both by assuming the style and arms of England, and by troops sent into Scotland to accomplish her ambitious purposes. It then proceeds in these remarkable words :—“It is also to be remembered, that seeing now, before this attempt of marriage, it was found and manifestly seen, that in every corner of the realm the faction that most favoureth the Scottish title is grown stout and bold, yea, seen manifestly in this court, both in hall and chamber, it could not be but (except good heed were speedily given to it) the same faction would speedily increase by this marriage, and by the practice of the fautor [author] thereof, and grow so great and dangerous, as the redress thereof would be almost desperate. And to this purpose it was to be remembered how, of late, in perusing of the substance of the Justices of Peace in all the counties of the realm, *scantly a third part was found fully assured to be trusted in the matter of religion*, upon which only string the Queen of Scots' title doth hang; and some doubts might be that the friends of the Earl of Lennox had more knowledge of this than was meet, and thereby made their vaunt now in Scotland that their party was so great in England that the queen's majesty dared not attempt to oppose the marriage.” In this sort was the sum of the perils declared.

Upon the second question, What was best to be done to avoid these dangers? it was determined, that the first way

was to obtain that the queen's majesty would marry, and hold them with no long delay. Secondly, that measures should be taken to advance and fortify the profession of religion, both in Scotland and in England. Third, that proceedings should be commenced, either altogether to break off this intended marriage, or at least to procure the same not to be so hurtful to the realm as otherwise it might be; and lastly, that some intelligence should be used in Scotland with the party opposed to the marriage, and comfort given them from time to time.¹

It will be seen from this authentic paper that the apprehensions entertained regarding the effects of this union with Darnley upon the Popish faction in England (which was far stronger than is generally believed) were not altogether ideal. There seem to have been two parties amongst the English Protestants, who viewed the match with different feelings. Elizabeth herself, with the Earl of Leicester, and the powerful anti-Cecilian faction which supported him, were suspected to regard the marriage with no great dislike, although for the moment she judged it prudent to dissemble, and to appear deeply offended. It delivered the English queen from the fear that Mary should make some potent foreign alliance—with Austria or Spain—and it kept at court her favourite Leicester. These sentiments, too, were well known at the Scottish court, and Randolph was repeatedly met by the observation that the resentment of his royal mistress was mere dissimulation.² But the other party were more sincere and determined in their opposition. Cecil, Bedford, and Randolph had deeply intrigued with Scotland; they believed that the overthrow of their friends, the Earls of Moray, Argyle, and Lethington,

would put an end to English influence in that country; they dreaded lest Lennox and Darnley might in time be won over by the queen to re-establish the Romish faith, which it was known they secretly professed, and they adopted every means to thwart the designs of the Scottish queen. Nor were these means of the purest or most upright kind: as long as Mary, deceived and drawn on by the protestations and duplicity of Elizabeth, placed herself under the guidance of this princess, she was represented in the letters of Randolph as amiable, truthful, affectionate, and popular. The Protestants were described as contented, excepting only the most violent, whose conduct this envoy repeatedly censures; and, (which is very remarkable,) not a year before this, both Moray and Lethington had assured the Queen of England that the conduct of their royal mistress in respect to the reformed religion entitled her to high praise: its foundation, they said, was perfectly secure; whilst they enjoyed liberty of conscience, and the favour of their prince, as abundantly as heart could wish.³ From that moment to the present not a step had been taken by the Queen of Scotland which could create suspicion in any reasonable mind that she meditated aught against the national religion. On the contrary, the Catholic party had been treated with undue severity; the private exercise of her religion had been threatened to be abridged; the sanctity of her chapel and her palace invaded; and the laws against the mass carried into the strictest execution, even where the offenders were of the highest rank in the Church. These were all facts with which Randolph, the English minister, was perfectly familiar, and which can be proved from his own letters. Yet, no sooner did Mary fix her choice on Darnley, no sooner did it become apparent to Moray that his power was on the wane, and to Randolph that the English faction in Scotland was likely to lose ground, and to be superseded in their authority, than the letters of

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original draft by Cecil, June 4, 1565.

² Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, 21st May 1565, printed in Keith, p. 280. Also, Randolph to Cecil, 2d July, printed in Keith, p. 288. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 15th April 1565. Ibid., same to same, 29th April 1565.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, 13th July 1564.

this pliant envoy abounded with complaints and misrepresentations. The reformed religion was described as not only in danger, but already ruined, and the godly undone; the queen was said to be fallen into universal contempt; we are told that her whole character had altered within a few days, that even her countenance and beauty were decayed, so that many thought she was bewitched; and lastly, that an irresistible party had resolved to oppose the marriage and avert the ruin of their country.

The events which now occurred, and the conduct respectively pursued by Mary, the Protestants, and Elizabeth, proved these statements to be exaggerated and unfounded. The measures of the Scottish queen, under an irritating opposition, were temperate and conciliating. She sent Hay, her Master of Requests, a prudent and able man, a favourite of Moray, and a friend of Randolph, on a mission to the English queen. He was to labour not only to reconcile Elizabeth to her union with Darnley, but to state her anxiety to preserve peace, her resolution to postpone her marriage for a short time, and her desire that there should be a meeting of commissioners from both countries, to deliberate on the best means of composing the differences which had occurred.¹ On the other hand, the Protestants, led by Moray and Argyle, attempted to overawe their sovereign; they solicited earnestly the assistance of the English queen, and debated among themselves whether it would be best to assassinate Darnley, or to seize him and his father, and deliver them up to England. Some time before the mission of Hay, Randolph, describing the pride and passionate temper of this young favourite, thus writes to Cecil:—"Her [Mary's] councillors are now those whom she liked worst, the nearest of her kin, the farthest from her heart. My Lord of Moray liveth where he lists. My

Lord of Lethington hath now both leave and time enough to make court unto his mistress.² . . . David is he that now worketh all, chief secretary to the queen, and only governor to her good man; the bruits here are wonderful—men talk very strange—the hazard towards him and his house marvellous great; his pride intolerable, his words not to be borne, but where no man dare speak again. He spareth not also, in token of his manhood, to let some blows fly where he knoweth that they will be taken. Such passions, such furies, as I hear say, that sometimes he will be in, is strange to believe. What cause this people hath to rejoice of this their worthy prince, I leave it to the world to think. When they have said all, and thought what they can, they find nothing but that God must send him a short end, or themselves a miserable life, to live under such estate and government as this is like to be! What comfort can they look for at the queen's majesty's hands, or what support if aught should be attempted, seeing the most part are persuaded that to this end he was sent into this country. I spare here to speak so much as I have heard; and knowing so little of the queen's mind as I do, I know not what counsel or advice to give." . . . The letter then alludes to the great hazard of Moray and his party in these remarkable words:—"To see so many in hazard, as now stand in danger of life, land, and goods, it is great pity to think—only to remedy this mischief, he [Darnley] must be taken away, or such as he hateth find such support, that whatsoever he intendeth to another may light upon himself. A little now spent in the beginning yieldeth double fruit. What were it for the queen's majesty, if she list not to do it by force, with the expense of three or four thousand pounds to do with this country what she would?"³

¹ Keith, p. 283. Instructions to Mr J. Hay. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 12th June 1565. Ibid., Mary to Elizabeth, St Johnston, 15th June 1565.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Leicester, 3d June 1565.

The proceedings of Elizabeth were at this moment marked by that duplicity and desire to embroil Mary with her own subjects which had all along characterised them. She had already placed the Countess of Lennox under restraint, but she now committed her to the Tower, a severity which could not fail to encourage Moray and his friends.¹ She sent a summons to the Earl of Lennox and his son Lord Darnley, commanding them, on their allegiance as English subjects, instantly to repair to her court.² Not long after, she addressed a letter to the Scottish queen, declaring her entire disapproval of her proceedings; and she instructed Randolph not only directly to communicate with Moray's faction, but to assure them that she would support them against the malice of their enemies as long as their efforts were directed to maintain the religion, and to preserve the amity between the two kingdoms.³

Nothing upon the part of Moray could be more futile and unfounded than the pretence that the Protestant religion was in danger, or that the queen at this moment had adopted any measures which threatened its security. It is happy for the truth that on such a point we have the declaration of Moray and Lethington themselves. On the 13th of July 1564, they stated to Cecil that the presence of Lennox in Scotland, even if he should be fortunate enough to ally himself with the most powerful person in the state, would be totally ineffectual to shake the national religion from that firm foundation on which it rested.⁴ These declarations, indeed, were made a year before this; but during the course of that year not only had the Scottish queen introduced no one measure which could by any ingenuity be deemed an attack

¹ Mr Stevenson's Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary, p. 140.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Queen Elizabeth to Queen Mary, 18th June 1565. (A Copy.)

³ The Queen of England to Randolph, 10th July 1565. Printed by Keith, p. 296.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 13th July 1564. Also, *Ibid.*, Moray to Cecil, same date.

upon the national religion, but she had shewn the most decided determination to support it as the religion of the state, and to enforce the cruel and unjust laws against those who adhered to the public exercise of a contrary faith. It is evident, therefore, that the Earl of Moray and the party of the nobles who opposed the marriage had raised the cry of "danger to the Church" merely to cover their own designs.

The same remark does not apply to Knox, who, after his long estrangement from Moray, now once more acted in concert with him. To the stern uncompromising mind of this reformer the mass was idolatry; so long as it maintained its place in the queen's private chapel, he believed that the Protestant faith was in danger, and that in permitting its use the preachers and the people committed a deadly sin. Moray had always contended for the right of the queen to have the private exercise of her religion: Knox had as obstinately denied it. He contended that, by the Word of God, and the laws of the land, every priest who dared to celebrate, and every person who ventured to attend, the mass was obnoxious to capital punishment; and he evidently considered that the sufferance of the "idol," as he named it, under any circumstances, was a direct infringement upon the rights and the security of the national religion. He is to be judged therefore by a different standard from that which must be applied to his ambitious and potent ally. Moray was the slave of private ambition: his paramount desire evidently was to retain the great power which he possessed, and in his efforts to effect this he repeated the same game which ambition has so often played: he masked his selfish projects under a zeal for religion. Knox, on the other hand, however fierce, dictatorial, and even unscrupulous as to means, was perfectly honest. No Church plunder can be traced to his hands; no pensions from England or France secured his services; nor is there the slightest evidence (at least I have discovered

none) that at any time he pursued a scheme of personal aggrandisement separate from that spiritual authority which attached itself to him as the great leader of the Reformation. His character was great, irregular, and imperfect: his views were often erroneous. In his mind many subjects assumed an undue importance and magnitude; whilst others, especially those connected with the practical influence of the gospel upon the heart and conduct, were often neglected or forgotten. But in his public career he was consistent, fearless, sincere; the single object to which he devoted himself was to establish on a sure foundation what he believed to be the only true faith—the only form of worship consistent with the declarations of Scripture and the glory of God. It is needless to point out to what a height this raises him above Moray, Argyle, Lethington, and the crowd of venal barons by whom he was surrounded.

Mary had summoned a convention of her nobility to be held at St Johnston on the 22d of June.¹ It was her intention in this assembly to procure their final consent to her union with Darnley, and to fix the period of her marriage. Instead of obeying her wishes, the discontented barons vigorously exerted themselves to traverse all her schemes. Moray refused to come to Perth, alleging that his life was in danger from a conspiracy formed by Darnley; Argyle, in concert with Knox and the preachers, appointed the General Assembly of the Church to be held at Edinburgh whilst the convention was sitting at Perth. There seems to be no doubt that the faction of Moray and the party of Knox now acted in concert; and the reformer, who possessed great influence with the people, bestirred himself so successfully against the queen, that, in a convocation of the citizens, held in the fields near Edinburgh, it was resolved to arm and organise the burgesses, to choose captains, and to seize the weapons of

such as were believed favourable to the marriage. At the same time, after lengthened debates, the General Assembly drew up a supplication to their sovereign.² It requested that the blasphemous mass and all popish idolatry should be abolished, not only throughout the kingdom, but also in her royal person and household; that true religion, as it is founded on the Word of God, should be professed as well by herself as by her subjects, and that it should be made obligatory upon all persons to resort to the preaching of the Word, and to prayers, if not every day, at least every Sunday. It proposed that some sure provision should be made for the support of the ministers of the gospel; that pluralities should be abolished; a strict examination instituted into the appointment of all teachers of youth in schools and colleges; a fund set apart for the maintenance of the poor, out of those lands which of old were destined to hospitality, and some relief devised for the poor labourers of the soil, who were oppressed in the payment of their tithes by unreasonable and illegal exactions.³

This petition was intrusted to the Earl of Glencairn, with five commissioners, who repaired to Perth, (1st July 1565,) and presented it to the queen. Her conduct at this crisis is entitled to much praise. She was alarmed by the accounts of the hostile and tumultuous assembly of the citizens in Edinburgh, and when she read the demands of the Church it was evident that they approached indefinitely near to the compelling herself, and all who adhered to the Catholic faith, to renounce what they believed to be true, and embrace what they were persuaded was false. Yet her answer was temperate and conciliatory. She declared that it was impossible for her to renounce the mass herself, or to abolish it in her household, not being yet persuaded that there was any impiety in this great service of the Church. She reminded the commissioners how completely

¹ Letter, Randolph to Cecil, in Keith, p. 387, 2d July 1565

² Spottiswood, p. 190.

³ Ibid.

liberty of conscience, since her arrival in her dominions, had been permitted to all her subjects, and she expected in return, she said, "the same liberty to be granted to herself. As for the establishment of religion in the body of the realm, she declared that she was ready to abide by the decision of the three estates of parliament, as soon as they were convened, and to whom alone, as they were well aware, the determination of so important a question belonged."¹

A more gentle and reasonable reply to an extravagant demand could hardly have been given; but the discontented lords were still unsatisfied: they were undone if the queen was left to follow her own wishes, and the marriage went forward; and, acting under this conviction, they resolved either to compel her to submit to their dictation, or to put it out of her power to carry her designs into effect. With this purpose, Moray, Argyle, and Lord Boyd held a secret meeting at Lochleven,² and from thence sent a confidential messenger to communicate their designs to Randolph, and to understand from him whether Elizabeth would receive Lennox and Darnley if they were seized, and sent prisoners to Berwick. The ambassador answered, that the queen his mistress would receive her own subjects, "in what sort soever they came;" and thus encouraged, these daring men formed a plot to attack the Scottish queen as she rode, with Darnley in her company, from Perth to Callander, a seat of Lord Livingston's. The route to be travelled afforded two favourable situations for such a surprise; the one a wild narrow defile near Perth, called the pass of Dron,³ the other a tract of broken and difficult ground near Beith, some miles north of the Queensferry. It was intended, according to Randolph's account, to have carried Mary to St Andrews, and Darnley to castle Campbell; but these were only preli-

minary steps: Moray's ultimate object (if we may believe the assertion of a brother conspirator) was to murder Darnley, seize the government, and imprison the queen for life in Lochleven.⁴

This traitorous plot was signally defeated by the courage and celerity of Mary's movements. Having received some hint of her danger, she commanded Athole and Ruthven to assemble their followers, and leaving Perth with an escort of three hundred horse in the dawn of the morning, traversed the country with the utmost speed, passed Lochleven and Kinross without drawing bridle, pushed on to the ferry, and, crossing the Firth, reached Callander House in safety. Two hours after she passed Argyle appeared at Kinross, but the prey had escaped him; and their treacherous enterprise becoming publicly known, excited the utmost indignation in the country.⁵ Disappointed in this attempt, Moray and his associates made a last endeavour to rouse the people. They resumed in a still louder tone the cry that the queen was determined to overthrow religion, to break the amity which had of late united them to England, and to commence anew her persecution of the brethren. They implored the assistance and support of Elizabeth; assured her that Bothwell, the mortal enemy of English influence, had been sent for; besought her to let loose "some strapping Elliots" upon Lord Hume, Mary's great partisan, on the marches towards Lothian, who might keep his hands full at home; and attempted to rouse her jealousy by spreading rumours of an intercourse with France and Rome.⁶ But from neither quarter did they receive much sympathy or encouragement; Elizabeth fed them with empty promises, the people grew lukewarm

15 miles

¹ Randolph to Cecil, 4th July 1565, in Keith, p. 291. Also, "Instructions and Articles addressed to the Commissioners of the Queen of Scots, 12th September 1568." Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 358, 359.

² Randolph to Cecil, in Keith, p. 291. Melville's Memoirs, p. 135.

³ Randolph to Cecil, 4th July 1565. Keith, pp. 294, 295.

¹ Spottiswood, p. 190. Keith, p. 289. Randolph to Cecil, 2d July 1565.

² Mr Stevenson's Illustrations of the Reign of Mary, p. 118. Argyle and Moray to Randolph, 1st July 1565.

³ Knox, p. 412.

or suspicious. They were aware of no act upon the part of the queen which manifested hostility to their religion; on the contrary, when at Callander, she had for the first time in her life attended the Protestant sermon.) She declared her readiness to hear Erskine of Dun, one of the leading reformers, but a man of a mild and peaceable disposition, in his exposition of the errors of the Church of Rome; and she hastened, by a solemn proclamation, to assure her subjects that no alteration was meditated in the national religion; that the same liberty of conscience which, since her arrival in her dominions, had been enjoyed by all classes of her people should still be maintained in its fullest sense.¹

At the same time, Mary exerted herself with uncommon vigour against the insurgent lords. As Argyle, her great enemy, and the most powerful ally of Moray, had collected his vassals, and was about to attack Athole—a nobleman who strenuously supported her—she despatched Lethington and the Justice-Clerk to arrest hostilities, and commanded them in her name to disband their forces.² Aware that a convocation of Moray's adherents was to be held at Glasgow, she sent a herald to that city to forbid all such illegal assemblies, under pain of treason;³ and at the same time she protracted the meeting of the three estates from July till September, justly thinking that it would have been vain and premature to attempt to hold a calm legislative assembly whilst a powerful faction, assisted and stimulated by the intrigues of England, were plotting to raise a civil war, and seemed not unlikely to succeed. But her last measure was the most decisive of all. She summoned her subjects to meet her instantly in arms in the capital, with fifteen days' provision, that she might proceed against her enemies.⁴

¹ MS. Privy-council Book, p. 73. It is printed in Keith, Appendix, pp. 106, 107.

² MS. Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, under July 6, 1565.

³ Ibid., under July 12, 1565.

⁴ Keith, p. 298. She at the same time addressed close letters to the principal nobles

Yet, whilst Mary felt herself compelled to adopt these severe proceedings against her insurgent barons, she made a final effort to reclaim Moray, the head of the revolt. He had refused to attend the convention at Stirling, alleging that his life was in danger from a conspiracy of Lennox and Darnley. These noblemen indignantly repelled the charge; and the Scottish queen, anxious to do justice to both parties, summoned him to appear, and make good his accusation. Lest he should plead that his obedience to her commands might expose him to the attacks of his enemies, she sent him her letters of safe-conduct.⁵ This passport extended protection not only to him, but to eighty attendants—no insufficient body-guard certainly; and to prevent all possibility of cavil, it was signed, not by the queen alone, but by all her Privy-council. At the same time Darnley transmitted a friendly message; and Lennox, for himself and his son, not only disclaimed the base designs imputed to them, but besought him to give up his informer, and offered to fight any one who dared avow the slander.⁶ This peremptory summons Moray did not think proper to obey, and his refusal was favourable to the cause of the queen. It warned Mary that nothing but open force could reduce her opponents; and it convinced many who were wavering that the alleged conspiracy was an invention of his own, equally unfounded with the alarm regarding the overthrow of the Protestant religion, and got up for the same purpose, of veiling his attempt for the recovery of the power which he had lost.

Meanwhile he had no mean assistant in Randolph. The character of this crafty agent of Cecil was of that accommodating and equivocal kind which, without loving misrepresentation (to use a mild word) for its own sake, did not hesitate to employ it

and gentry of her kingdom, requiring their instant attendance. Keith, p. 299.

⁵ Keith, p. 108, Appendix; Assurance to the Earl of Moray. Also, p. 110, Appendix

⁶ Keith, p. 302.

when he thought it would forward the designs of his royal mistress, or of her principal minister. As long as all went smoothly in Scotland, as long as the queen, deceived by the promises of Elizabeth, and acting under the guidance of Moray, was willing to consult the wishes of her royal sister, the letters of Randolph convey to us a pretty fair picture of the conduct of Mary and the progress of events; but as soon as she began to act for herself—as soon as her brother, the friend of England, was stript of his power and lost his influence, this minister transmitted to Cecil, and to the English queen, the most false and distorted accounts of the state of the country. His object was to induce Elizabeth to assist the insurgent lords with money and troops, as she had already done in the war of the Reformation; and to accomplish this end, he not only concealed the truth, but did not scruple to employ calumny and falsehood. He represented Mary's proceedings to her nobles as tyrannical, when they were forbearing; he described her as earnestly bent on the destruction of religion, when for five years she had maintained it exactly as she found it on her arrival, and had recently, by a solemn proclamation, declared her determination to preserve the fullest liberty of conscience; he painted her as an object of contempt to her subjects, when she was popular and beloved; and as deserted by her nobles and her people, when, in consequence of the late summons, her barons and vassals were daily crowding into the capital.¹ On the other hand, Moray and his faction were equally falsely depicted as so strong that the country lay at their mercy, whilst they waited only for the advice and the money of England to sweep away every opposition, and compel the queen to place herself once more at their disposal. These

accounts, however, made little impression upon the English queen, and it is probable that she was aware of their being inconsistent with the truth. She directed her ambassador, however, to intercede for Moray; but the application, as might have been expected, met with no success. Mary thanked her good sister for her advice, but lamented that she should be so entirely misinformed. "Those," said she to Randolph, "whom your mistress calls my best subjects I can never account so, as they resist my authority; and the queen must not be offended if I pursue the remedy which I have in my own hands."² The ambassador then addressed himself to Lennox and Darnley, reminding them of Elizabeth's peremptory order for their repair into England, and charging them, as her subjects, to obey it; but he met with a decided refusal: from the father in terms of respect, from the son in so proud and insolent a tone that Randolph turned his back upon him, and they parted in contempt and anger.³

In the midst of these transactions, the insurgent lords became daily convinced that, if not speedily supported by England, their struggle must be brought to a calamitous termination. Every hour added to the strength of the queen; her solemn public assurances that no alteration was meditated in the national religion; her successful detection of the interested schemes and false representations of her enemies; the vigour and decision with which she acted, and the anxiety she evinced to preserve amity with Elizabeth, although irritated by the constant misrepresentations and seditious intrigues of Randolph,—all these circumstances produced the most favourable effect, and convinced the great body of her subjects that Moray, and the faction which opposed her measures, were actuated by no other motive than selfishness and ambition.

It was now the end of July, and Chisholm, bishop of Dunblane, having

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, July 7, 1565. Also, Keith, p. 301. Randolph to Cecil, 19th July 1565. Again in Keith, p. 287, Randolph to Cecil, 2d July 1565. Again in Keith, p. 304, Randolph to Cecil, 21st July 1565. And MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to the Queen, 23d July 1565..

² Keith, p. 303, Randolph to Cecil, 2 July 1565.

³ Keith, p. 304.

Mary married in mourning
arrived from Rome with a dispensation for the marriage, it was intimated to the people, by a public proclamation, that the queen had resolved to take to her husband an illustrious prince, Henry, Duke of Albany, for which reason she commanded her subjects henceforth to give him the title of king. Next day, being Sunday, the 29th of July, the ceremony was performed in the royal chapel of Holyrood, at six in the morning. Mary was habited in deep mourning, and it was superstitiously observed that it was the same dress which she wore on the melancholy day of her late husband's obsequies. After the solemnity, and when the youthful pair had risen from the altar, Darnley embraced and kissed the bride, and, retiring from the chapel, left her to hear mass alone, surrounded only by those nobles who adhered to

the ancient faith. On the conclusion of the service, being conducted back to her chamber, she consented, at the earnest entreaty of her husband, to renounce her weeds, and assume a costume more suited to the happiness of the day. The banquet succeeded, in which the queen was served by the Earl of Athole as sewer, Morton as carver, and Crawford as cup-bearer. The king, sitting beside her, was waited on by the Earls of Eglinton, Cassillis, and Glencairn. Money in abundance was scattered among the guests, the hall rang with music and cries of "largess," and the evening closed with the dances and joyous revelry which generally accompany such regal festivals.¹ Mary was then in her twenty-third, and Darnley had probably just completed his nineteen year.

CHAPTER VII.

M A R Y.

1565—1567.

PREVIOUS to her marriage with Darnley, Mary had become assured that Moray and his faction were ready to rise in rebellion against her government if they met with the least encouragement from England; after this event, every day convinced her that Randolph, the English ambassador, was using all his efforts to induce her barons to throw off their allegiance, and that Elizabeth not only approved of their proceedings, but secretly stimulated them to revolt.²

To prepare for this emergency, the Scottish queen summoned her sub-

jects to meet her in arms in the capital.³ Her safety lay in promptitude and decision; she resolved to anticipate the movements of her opponents before it was possible for them to receive succour from England; and in this her efforts were eminently successful. Three days after her marriage, Moray was commanded to appear at court under the penalty of being proclaimed a rebel; and having failed, he was "put to the horn," as it was termed—that is, his

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Moray to Cecil, Carlisle, Oct. 14, 1565. [I may here observe where the words *MS. letter* occur, the reader may consider the letter to be an original. When I quote a copy, the word *copy* is subjoined.]

³ MS. Proclamation, State-paper Office, July 16, 1565. Copy of the time endorsed by Randolph.

¹ Randolph to Leicester, July 31; in Robertson's Appendix, No. xi. This noted letter, which had been printed by Robertson, has been printed, as if for the first time, by Von Raumer. Also Keith, p. 307. Chalmers's Life of Mary, vol. ii. p. 127.

life and estates were declared forfeited to the laws: upon which Randolph, in a letter addressed to the Queen of England, implored her to strengthen the hands of the English party in Scotland, and to save them from utter ruin.¹ He wrote also to the Earl of Bedford, an old and tried friend of Moray's, urging him to use his influence to procure instant assistance, and assuring him that if the English Borderers could be let loose at this crisis, so as to keep their Scottish neighbours employed, the queen and Darnley would be reduced to great distress.² His letters to Elizabeth contained an alarming picture of affairs in Scotland. He represented religion, by which he meant Protestantism, as in danger; and affirmed that the amity between the two kingdoms was on the point of being broken. But the English queen was slow to credit all his statements, and contented herself with despatching Mr Tamworth, one of the gentlemen of her bedchamber, to the Scottish court, with the vain object of accomplishing a reconciliation between Mary and the Earl of Moray.³

This, however, was now impossible. The Scottish queen, convinced that Moray's sole purpose was to recover the power which he had lost, allowed her enemies no time to concentrate their strength, but at the head of a force which defied opposition compelled them to fly from Stirling to Glasgow, and from Glasgow to Argyll.⁴ She then returned to Edinburgh, where Tamworth had arrived; and this envoy being admitted to an audience, was received by Mary with a spirit for which he seems not to have been prepared.⁵

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to the Queen. [When in the notes I use the words to the Queen, in quoting any letter, the Queen of England is meant.] 23d July 1565, Edinburgh.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Bedford, Edinburgh, 24th July 1565.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Tamworth and Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, 10th August 1565.

⁴ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 82. Keith, p. 316. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mary to the Master of Maxwell, copy, Edinburgh, 23d August 1565.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Tamworth

In the letter which Elizabeth sent to this princess she had affected to treat with contempt her pretensions to the English throne, and her practices with foreign powers; but Mary could express herself as severely, though with greater command of temper than her sister of England. After defending her marriage, and remonstrating against the uncalled-for interference of Elizabeth, she turned to the subject of the succession. "I am not," said she, "so lowly born, nor yet have I such small alliances abroad, that if compelled by your mistress to enter into 'practices' with foreign powers, she shall find them of such small account as she believes. The place which I fill in relation to the succession to the crown of England is no vain or imaginary one, and by God's grace it shall appear to the world that my designs and consultations shall prove as substantial as those which at any time my neighbours have taken in hand."⁶

But although she repelled Elizabeth's haughty and sarcastic insinuations, Mary was sincerely desirous of peace. To promote this, she promised Randolph all that could justly be required. She could not consent indeed to renounce her title to a throne to which she held her claim to be undoubted, but she was ready to come under the most solemn obligation that neither she nor her husband should attempt anything to the prejudice of the English queen or of her issue, and that whenever God called them to the possession of their right in England, no alteration should be made in the religion, laws, or liberties of that ancient kingdom. In return, she insisted on the performance of two conditions: the first, that Elizabeth, by act of parliament, should settle the English crown upon herself and Darnley, in the first instance, and, in default of them and their children, on the Lady Margaret, countess of Lennox; the

and Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, 10th August 1565.

⁶ MS. State-paper Office, Answers given by the Queen of Scots to "Articles" proposed by Mr Tamworth, 12th August 1565.

second, that she should offer no countenance or assistance to her rebels.¹

In this last stipulation Mary was peremptory; for she had discovered that Randolph, the English ambassador,² intrigued with Moray, and she then suspected (what is now established beyond a doubt by the original letters of the actors in these unworthy scenes) that Elizabeth's advice and encouragement were at the bottom of the whole rebellion. Without waiting, therefore, for any further communication from England, she deemed it proper to take a determined step. The English ambassador was informed that he must either promise upon his honour to renounce all intercourse with her rebels, or be put under the charge of those who should take care to detect and restrain his practices. Randolph's reply to the Privy-council was more a defiance than an answer. "I will promise nothing," said he, "either on honour, honesty, word, or writing; and as for guards to attend me, they shall fare full ill, unless stronger and better armed than my own servants." Lethington, the secretary, then proposed that he should retire to Berwick; but this, too, he peremptorily refused. "Wheresoever the queen your mistress keeps her court," was his reply, "there, or not far off, is my place. If I am driven from this, it is easy to see what mind is borne to my sovereign."³ His insolence encouraged Tamworth to equal arrogance: he refused to give Darnley the royal title, and declined accepting a passport, because it bore his signature as king; but this ill-judged presumption cost him dear. On his way home, a hint having been given to the Borderers, he was waylaid, maltreated,

and carried a prisoner to Hume Castle, from which he addressed a letter to Cecil, detailing his sorrowful adventure.⁴

In the meantime Elizabeth amused the insurgent barons by large promises and small pecuniary advances; and, thus encouraged, Moray, the duke, and Glencairn, at the head of a thousand men, advanced to Edinburgh, which they entered on the last day of August.⁴ The movement proved to be ill-judged and premature. The citizens received them coldly—not a man joined their ranks; it was in vain they endeavoured to excite an alarm that religion was in danger; in vain they addressed a letter to the queen, in which they threatened that, if she continued to pursue them, their blood should be dearly bought;⁵ in vain that they despatched urgent entreaties for assistance to Bedford and Cecil.⁶ Before time was given for reply Mary had marched against them; a cannonade was opened from the castle, and they were compelled with precipitation and dismay to abandon the capital and retire to Dumfries.⁷ From this place they despatched Robert Melvil, brother to the well-known Sir James Melvil, to the English court. He was instructed to require the immediate assistance of three thousand men, and the presence of some ships of war in the Firth.⁸

With these exorbitant demands Elizabeth could not possibly have complied, unless she had been prepared to rush into open war; she was

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Tamworth to Cecil, Hume Castle, 21st August 1565.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, 31st August 1565. Same to the same, 1st September 1565.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, contemporary copy. Letter from the Lords to the Queen, sent from Edinburgh to Glasgow, 1st September 1565.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Border Correspondence; [henceforth to be marked simply by the letters B.C.] Bedford to Cecil, Berwick, 2d September 1565. State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 2d September 1565, Edinburgh.

⁷ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, 4th September 1565.

⁸ MS. State-paper Office, Instructions given to Robert Melvil, 10th September 1565.

now convinced that Randolph had misled or deceived her, by overrating the strength of the insurgents. She had believed that the whole country was ready to rise against the government of Mary and Darnley, and a short time before Melvil's arrival had directed Bedford to assist them both with money and soldiers.¹ On discovering, however, the real weakness of Moray's faction, these orders were countermanded, and the insurgents found themselves in the alarming predicament of having risen in rebellion trusting to succours which never arrived.²

Nor did Mary give Elizabeth time, even had she so determined, to save her friends. Before a company of horse, pikes, or bowmen could have reached the Borders, the Scottish queen had swept with her forces through Fife; inflicted chastisement on the Laird of Grange and other barons who had joined the rebels; levied a heavy fine on the towns of Dundee and St Andrews; seized castle Campbell, and prepared, at the head of an army which rendered opposition fruitless, to attack the rebel lords at Dumfries. So keen was she in the pursuit that she rode with pistols at her saddle bow, and declared to Randolph that she would rather peril her crown than lose her revenge.³

At this crisis the Earl of Bothwell returned from France, profiting by the disgrace of Moray, whose power had expelled him from his country. He was favourably received by the queen, although well known to be a rash, daring, and profligate man; but his extensive Border estates gave him much power, and the circumstances in which Mary was placed made her welcome any baron who could bring a formidable force into the field.⁴ In his company came David Chambers, a per-

son of a dark, intriguing spirit, who had long been a retainer of this nobleman's, and although a lord of the session, more likely to outrage than administer the law.

Aware that the arrival of such partisans would be followed by the most determined measures, the rebel lords made a last effort to alarm Elizabeth on the subject of religion. They transmitted to Robert Melvil, their envoy in England, a paper entitled "Informations to be given to the Queen's Majesty, in favour of the Church of Christ, now begun to be persecuted in the chief members of the same."⁵ Even the title of this paper contained a misrepresentation of the truth, for at this moment, so far from persecution, there was complete religious toleration in Scotland. Its contents, too, were of questionable accuracy; certainly highly coloured. Melvil was directed to assure the English queen that nothing was meant by Mary, and him who was now joined with her, but the utter subversion of the religion of Jesus Christ within the realm, and the erecting again of all papistry and superstition. "The cause," said they, "why our destruction is sought is, first, the zeal that we bear to the maintenance of the true religion; and, secondly, the care that we have to redress the great enormities lately crept into the public regimen of this miserable commonwealth." The patrimony of the crown was described as so dilapidated that it was impossible the common expenses could be borne; and this, they affirmed, had led to the persecution of honourable men, and the promotion of crafty foreigners, chiefly two Italians, David Riccio and Francisco, who, with other unworthy persons, occupied the place in council belonging to the ancient nobility. As to the Earl of Moray, he was hated, they said, because he would not support Riccio in his abuses; whilst a

¹ The Queen to Bedford, September 12, 1565. Appendix to Robertson's History of Scotland, vol. i. No. xiii.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lords of Scotland to Mr Melvil, Dumfries, 15th September 1565.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, September 9, 1565. Ibid., same to the same, Edinburgh, August 27, 1565. Ibid., same to the same, Edinburgh, September 4, 1565.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil,

Edinburgh, September 19 and 20, 1565. The same to the same, Edinburgh, September 1, 1565.

⁵ MS. State-paper Office, Informations given to the Queen's Majesty of England, and the Council, in favour of religion in Scotland, September 22, 1565.

stranger, (meaning Darnley,) the subject of another realm, had intruded himself into the state, and claimed the name and authority of a king, without their consent, against all order that ever was used in this realm; and now, because they desired redress of these great enormities, they were persecuted as traitors and enemies to the commonwealth.¹

Although in some parts exaggerated, these fears and accusations were not without foundation. Mary had undoubtedly negotiated with the Roman see for an advance of money, and the pope had transmitted to her the sum of eight thousand crowns in a vessel, which, being wrecked on the coast of England, fell a prey to the cupidity of the Earl of Northumberland.²

She was in correspondence also with Philip II., who had expressed to the Cardinal Pacheco, the papal envoy, his determination to assist her to subdue her rebels, maintain the Catholic faith, and vindicate her right to the English throne. Nor did the Spanish king confine himself to mere promises. He had sent a remittance of twenty thousand crowns to Guzman de Silva, his ambassador at the court of England, with orders to employ it "with the utmost secrecy and address in the support of the Scottish queen and her husband."³ It was true, also, that Mary had appointed Riccio to the place of French secretary. This foreigner, who was a Milanese, had come to Scotland in the train of Moret, the Savoy ambassador, and his ambition was at first satisfied with the humble office of a singer in the queen's band; but, being well educated, he was occasionally employed in other matters, and on the dismissal of Raulet, her French secretary, Mary rewarded his talent with the vacant office. But when betrayed, as she had repeatedly

been by her own nobility, to whom office, but not fidelity, was transmitted by birth, it was not wonderful that the queen employed those whom she could better trust; and, on the whole, the arguments of the insurgents produced little effect upon Elizabeth. She was convinced of the power and popularity of the Scottish queen; the feebleness of Moray and his associates, whom she had bribed into rebellion, was proved beyond a doubt; and the moment this was discovered they were abandoned to their fate, without pity or remorse. True to her wonted dissimulation in all state policy, she assured them that she still favoured their enterprise, and was moved by their distress; but no remonstrances of Moray, who loudly declared that desertion was ruin, could extort from her either money or troops.⁴ At this moment, Monsieur de Mauvissiere, better known as the Sieur de Castelnau, was in England, whither he had been sent by his master the French king, to accomplish, if possible, a reconciliation between Mary and Elizabeth. By the advice of Cecil, Mauvissiere and Cockburn, the last a creature of this minister, and known to Mary as an archer in the Scottish Guard, repaired to Scotland, and made an attempt to procure a pardon for Moray and his associates. To both the queen readily gave audience, and the picture given by them of the miserable and distracted state of her kingdom was so sad and true as to draw many tears from her eyes;⁵ but when the terms upon which they proposed to mediate were stated, her spirit rose against the imperious dictation of Elizabeth, she dismissed the envoys, and proceeded instantly against her rebels, who still lay, with a few horse, at Dumfries. On advancing at the head of her army, Lord Maxwell, the most powerful baron in these quarters, hastened to make his submission; and Moray, with the chiefs

¹ Id., ut supra.

² Keith, p. 316.

³ Gonzalez Apuntamientos para la Historia del Rey Felipe II., p. 312, published in vol. vii. of the Memoirs of the Historical Society of Madrid. The work was pointed out to me by a kind and respected friend, to whom I am indebted for some valuable papers and references—Mr Howard of Corby Castle.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, an answer for Robert Melvil, October 1st, 1565. Entirely in Cecil's hand.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, October 2, 1565, Captain Cockburn to Cecil. "She wept wondrous sore."

of his faction, fled in terror to Carlisle.¹

From this city the Scottish earl addressed a letter of remonstrance to Cecil, imploring his mistress to save them from the wreck of "honour, conscience, and estate." On the other hand, Mary, a few days before, had written in spirited terms to Elizabeth. It had been reported, she said, much to her astonishment, that her sister of England intended to protect her rebellious subjects who had fled to the Borders. She declared her unwillingness to give credit to such tales; but, should they prove true, should she make common cause with such traitors, she avowed her resolution to denounce such wrongful dealings to all the foreign princes who were her allies. The English queen was alarmed. The French and Spanish ambassadors took Mary's part, and accused Elizabeth, in no measured terms, of fomenting civil commotions in other realms that she might avert danger from her own. It was her favourite policy, they affirmed: Scotland proved it; and at this instant the rebels there acted by her encouragement, and in their distress looked to her as their last resource.

Moray, by this time, was travelling to the English court, and Elizabeth found herself in an awkward predicament; but it was necessary to take immediate measures, and those which she adopted strongly marked her character. An envoy was hurried off to command the Scottish earl and his friends, on pain of her displeasure, to remain at a distance. This was the public message intended to vindicate her fair dealing to the world. The messenger encountered and stopped Moray at Ware. Here the earl remained, and here he soon received a secret message, permitting him to come forward.² He obeyed, and was

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford to Cecil, Carlisle, October 14, 1565.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to the Privy-council, Ware, October 21, 1565.

MS. State-paper Office, Copy of the speech to the Earl of Moray, October 23, corrected throughout and partly written in Cecil's hand.

admitted into the presence of the English queen; but it was to be made an actor in a scene which overwhelmed him with confusion. She had summoned the French and Spanish ambassadors to be present. Moray and the Abbot of Kilwinning entered the apartment, fell upon their knees, and implored her intercession with the queen their mistress. "I am astonished," said Elizabeth, "that you have dared, without warning, to come before me; are you not branded as rebels to your sovereign? have you not spurned her summons, and taken arms against her authority? I command you, on the faith of a gentleman, to declare the truth." Moray repelled the charge of treason, lamented that he was encompassed with enemies, who made it dangerous for him to come to court, and declared that the accusation that he had plotted to seize the person of his sovereign, and had been encouraged in his rebellion by the Queen of England, was utterly false and ridiculous. The whole pageant had evidently been arranged beforehand,³ and Elizabeth's answer was in perfect keeping. Turning in proud triumph to the foreign ambassadors, she bade them mark his words, and then, with an expression of anger and contempt, she addressed Moray and the Abbot of Kilwinning, still on their knees before her. "It is well," said she, "that you have told the truth for neither did I, nor any one else in my name, ever encourage you in your unnatural rebellion against your sovereign; nor, to be mistress of a world, could I maintain any subject in disobedience to his prince: it might move God to punish me by a similar trouble in my own realm. But as for you two, ye are unworthy traitors, and I command you instantly to leave my presence."⁴

³ MS. State-paper Office, Copy of the Queen's speech to the Earl of Moray, before the French ambassador, the Sieur de Mauvissiere, and the Queen's council, October 23. Also Melville's Memoirs, p. 57.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, Copy of the Queen's speech to the Earl of Moray, before the French ambassador, the Sieur de Mauvissiere, and the Queen's council, October 23.

The earl and his friend were then ignominiously driven from court, and care was taken to render as public as possible the severe treatment they had received, so that the news soon reached the court in Scotland, and occasioned great triumph to the party of Mary and the king. "All the contrary faction," said Randolph, in a letter from Edinburgh to Cecil, "are discouraged, and think themselves utterly undone."¹ Nor did they want good reason to think so, for the Scottish queen summoned a parliament to meet in February, and it was publicly declared that the forfeiture of Moray and his adherents was the principal business to be brought before it.²

It is scarcely necessary here to repeat, what has been apparent from innumerable examples in the course of this history, that feudal forfeiture was in these days equivalent to absolute ruin; that it stripped the most potent baron at once of his whole estates and authority, throwing him either as an outcast upon the charity of some foreign country, or exposing him to be hunted down by those vassals whose allegiance followed the land, and not the lord.

To avert this dreadful calamity Moray exerted himself to the utmost. He interceded with Leicester, he wrote to Cecil, imploring him to save him from being "wrecked for ever."³ He addressed a letter to Elizabeth, and he even condescended to court Riccio.

The influence of this Milanese adventurer had been gradually increasing. At this moment Maitland of Lethington, the secretary of state, was suspected of having been nearly connected with the rebellion of Moray;⁴ and, as a trustworthy servant was a prize rarely to be found, the queen began to consult her French secretary in affairs of secrecy and moment. The

step was an imprudent one, and soon was attended with the worst effects. It roused the jealousy of the king, a weak and suspicious youth, who deemed it an affront that a stranger of low origin should presume to interfere in state affairs; and it turned Riccio's head, who began to assume, in his dress, equipage, and establishment, a foolish state, totally unsuited to his rank.⁵ In the meantime, his influence was great, and Moray bespoke his good offices by the present of a rich diamond, with a letter soliciting his assistance.⁶

Had Mary been left to herself, there is little doubt that her rebels would have been pardoned. Her natural generosity, and the intercession of some powerful friends, strongly impelled her to the side of mercy;⁷ and she had already consented to delay the parliament, and to entertain proposals for the restoration of the banished lords, when an unforeseen circumstance occurred, which led to unfortunate results. This was the arrival of two gentlemen, De Rambouillet and Clerneau, on a mission from the French court. Their message was outwardly one of mere ceremony, to invest the young king with the order of St Michael; but, amid the festivities attendant on the installation, a more important and secret communication took place. Clerneau, the special envoy of the Cardinal Lorraine, and Thornton, a messenger from Beaton, the Scottish ambassador in France, who had come to court about the same time, informed Mary of the coalition which had been concluded between France, Spain, and the emperor, for the destruction of the Protestant cause in Europe. It was a design worthy of the dark and unscrupulous politicians by whom it had been planned—Catherine of Medicis, and the Duke of Alva. In the summer of the preceding year, the Queen-dowager of France and Alva had met at Bayonne, during a progress, in which she con-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, November 8, 1565.

² Ibid., Edinburgh, December 23, 1565.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Newcastle, January 9, 1565-6. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Leicester, Newcastle, December 25, 1565.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, December 1, 1565.

⁵ Spottiswood, p. 193.

⁶ Sir James Melvil's Memoirs, p. 157. Bannatyne Club edition.

⁷ Sir J. Melvil, p. 146.

ducted her youthful son and sovereign, Charles IX., through the southern provinces of his kingdom; and there, whilst the court was dissolved in pleasure, those secret conferences were held which issued in the resolution that toleration must be at an end, and that the only safety for the Roman Catholic faith was the extermination of its enemies.¹

Thornton accordingly brought from the Cardinal Lorraine the "*band*" or league which had been drawn up on this occasion; it was whispered that some of her friends in England were parties to it, and Mary was strongly urged to become a member of the coalition. Her intention of pardoning Moray and her other rebels was at the same time opposed by these foreign envoys, with the utmost earnestness. It was represented as her only safe policy to crush, while she had it in her power, that busy Protestant faction, which had been so long encouraged, and was even at this moment secretly supported by Elizabeth, and to join that sacred league to which she was united, as well by the bonds of a mutual faith as by those of blood and affection. If she adopted this method, it was argued, her authority within her realm would be placed upon a secure foundation; if she neglected it, her misfortunes, however complicated they had already been, were only in their commencement.

Riccio, who at this moment possessed much influence, and was, on good grounds, suspected to be a pensioner of Rome, seconded these views with all his power. On the other hand, she did not want advisers on the side of wisdom and mercy. Sir James Melvil in Scotland, and Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, one of her most powerful friends in England, earnestly implored her to pardon Moray, and adopt a conciliatory course.² Mary was not naturally inclined to harsh or cruel

measures, and for some time she vacillated between the adoption of temperate and violent counsels. But now the entreaties of her uncle the cardinal, the advice of her ambassador, the prejudices of her education, and the intolerance of the Protestants, and of Elizabeth, by whom she had been so often deceived, all united to influence her decision, and overmaster her better judgment. (In an evil hour she signed the league, and determined to hurry on the parliament for the forfeiture of the rebels.) This may, I think, be regarded as one of the most fatal errors of her life; and it proved the source of all her future misfortunes. She united herself to a bigoted and unprincipled association, which, under the mask of defending the truth, offered an outrage to the plainest precepts of the gospel. She imagined herself a supporter of the Catholic Church when she was giving her sanction to one of the worst corruptions of Romanism; and she was destined to reap the consequences of such a step in all their protracted bitterness.

The moment the queen's resolution was known, it blasted the hopes of Moray, and threw him and all Mary's enemies upon desperate courses. If the estates were allowed to meet, the consequence to them was ruin; if the councillors continued unchanged, and Riccio's advice was followed, it was certain the estates would meet: what, then, was to be done? The time was fast running on, and the remedy, if there was to be any, must be sudden. Such being the crisis, it was at once determined that the meeting of parliament should be arrested, the government of the queen and her ministers overturned; and that, to effect this, Riccio must be murdered. This last atrocious expedient was no new idea, for the seeds of an unformed conspiracy against the foreign favourite had been sown some time before; and of this Moray's friends now availed themselves, artfully uniting the two plots into one, the object of which was, the return of Moray, the de-thronement of the queen, and the

¹ Keith, p. 325. Mezeraï Abrégé Chronologique de l'Histoire de France, vol. v. pp. 87-8. Randolph to Cecil, February 7, 1565-6. Robertson's Appendix, No. xiv. Also, Bedford to Cecil, 14th February 1565-6, British Museum, Caligula, book x. fol. 391.

² Sir J. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 141, 144.

re-establishment of the Protestant leaders in the power which they had lost.

The origin, growth, and subsequent combination of these two conspiracies have never yet been understood, although they can be distinctly traced. The first plot for the death of Riccio was, strange to say, formed by no less personages than the young king and his father the Earl of Lennox. It had its rise in the jealousy and ambition of these unprincipled men, and the imprudent conduct of Mary. In the early ardour of her affection, the queen had promised Darnley the *crown matrimonial*, by which was meant an equal share with herself in the government; but after a few months she had the misery to discover that her love had been thrown away upon a husband whom it was impossible for her to treat with confidence or respect. He was fickle, proud, and suspicious; ambitious of power, yet incapable of business, and the easy dupe of every crafty or interested companion whom he met. It became necessary for Mary to draw back from her first promise. This led to coldness, to reproaches, soon to an absolute estrangement; even in public he treated her with harshness; he became addicted to low dissipation,¹ forsook her company, and threw himself into the hands of her enemies. They persuaded him that Riccio was the sole author of those measures which had deprived him of his due share in the government. But this was not all: Darnley had the folly to become the dupe of a more absurd delusion. He became jealous of the Italian secretary: he believed that he had supplanted him in the affections of the queen; he went so far as to assert that he had dishonoured his bed; and, in a furious state of mind, sent his cousin George Douglas to implore Lord Ruthven, in whom he had great confidence, to assist him against "the villain David."² Ruthven

was at this moment confined to bed by a dangerous sickness, which might have been supposed to unfit him for such desperate projects. He was, as he himself informs us, "scarcely able to walk twice the length of his chamber;" yet he consented to engage in the murder, and Darnley was sworn to keep all secret. But Randolph, the English minister, having become acquainted with the plot, revealed it to Leicester in a remarkable letter, which yet remains. He informed him that the king and his father, Lennox, were determined to murder Riccio; that within ten days the deed would be done; that, as to the queen, the crown would be torn from her whose dis honour was discovered; and that still darker designs were meditated against her person, which he did not dare to commit to writing. From his letter, which is very long, I must give this important passage. "I know now for certain," said he, "that this queen repenteth her marriage; that she hateth him [Darnley] and all his kin. I know that he knoweth himself that he hath a partaker in play and game with him; I know that there are practices in hand, contrived between the father and son, to come by the crown against her will. I know that if that take effect which is intended, David, with the consent of the king, shall have his throat cut within these ten days. Many things grievous and worse than these are brought to my ears; yea, of things intended against her own person, which, because I think better to keep secret than write to Mr Secretary, I speak not of them but now to your lordship."³

At this time Randolph, who, from

State-paper Office, Ruthven and Morton to Cecil, 27th March 1566.

³ Randolph to the Earl of Leicester, Edinburgh, 13th February 1565-6. This remarkable letter, which has never been published, is to be found in the Appendix to a privately printed and anonymous work, entitled "Maitland's Narrative," of which only twenty copies were printed. The book was politely presented to me by Mr Dawson Turner, in whose valuable collection of MSS. the original letter is preserved. See *Proofs and Illustrations*, No. XV

¹ Drury to Cecil, 16th February 1565-6. Keith, 329.

² This was about the 10th February. Ruthven's Narrative in Keith, Appendix, p. 119; and Caligula, book ix. fol. 219. MS. Letter,

the terms in which he described it, appears to have had no objection to the plot, was banished by Mary to Berwick, the queen having now discovered certain proof of his having encouraged and assisted Moray in his rebellion.¹ To supply his place, Ruthven, who perceived that the king's intent to murder the Italian gave him a good opportunity to labour for the return of his banished friends, called in the Earl of Morton, then chancellor of the kingdom.² This powerful and unscrupulous man proved an able assistant. Under his father, the noted George Douglas, he had been early familiarised with intrigue : he hated Riccio, and dreaded the assembling of parliament almost as much as Moray, from a report that he was to be deprived of certain crown lands, which had been improperly obtained, and to lose the seals as chancellor.³ Morton, too, was the personal friend of Moray; like him, he belonged to the party of the reformed Church; and when Ruthven and Darnley solicited his aid, he at once embraced the proposal for the murder of the secretary, and proceeded to complete the machinery of the conspiracy, with greater skill than his fierce but less artful associates.

His first endeavour was to strengthen their hands by procuring the co-operation of the party of the reformed Church; his next, to follow out Ruthven's idea, by drawing in Moray, and making the plot the means of his return to power; his last to secure the countenance and support of Elizabeth and her chief ministers, Cecil and Leicester.

In all this he succeeded. The con-

¹ MS. Letter communicated to me by the Hon. William Leslie Melvil; Mary to Melvil, 17th February 1565-6, a copy. Mary confronted Randolph before the privy-council, with Johnston, the person to whom he had delivered the money to be conveyed to Moray; and the evidence being considered conclusive, he received orders to quit the court, and retired to Berwick.

² Narrative, *ut supra*. Keith, p. 120, Appendix. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton and Ruthven to Cecil, Berwick, 27th March 1566.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Berwick, 6th March 1565.

sent and assistance of the leading Protestant barons was soon gained, and to neutralise any opposition on the part of their chief ministers was not found a difficult matter.⁴ They were in the deepest alarm at this moment. It was known that Mary had signed the Popish league; it was believed that Riccio corresponded with Rome; and there was no doubt that some measures for the restoration of the Roman Catholic religion were in preparation, and only waited for the parliament to be carried into execution.⁵ Having these gloomy prospects before their eyes, Knox and Craig, the ministers of Edinburgh, were made acquainted with the conspiracy;⁶ Bellenden, the justice-clerk, Makgill, the clerk register, the Lairds of Brunston, Calder, and Ormiston, and other leading men of that party, were, at the same time, admitted into the secret. It was contended by Morton, that only one way remained to extirpate the Romish faith, and replace religion upon a secure basis: this was to break off the parliament by the murder of Riccio, to imprison the queen, intrust Darnley with the nominal sovereignty, and restore the Earl of Moray to be the head of the government. Desperate as were these designs, the reformed party in Scotland did not hesitate to adopt them. Their horror of idolatry, the name they bestowed on the Roman Catholic religion, misled their judgment and hardened their feelings; and they regarded the plot as the act of men raised up by God for the destruction of an accursed superstition. The General Fast, which always secured the presence of a formidable and numerous band of partisans, was near approaching; and as the murder had

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton and Ruthven to Cecil, 27th March 1566.

⁵ Mary's own words in her letter describing the murder of Riccio, addressed to Beaton, her ambassador at the French court, are quite explicit upon this point. "The spiritual estate," says she, "being placed therein in the ancient manner, tending to have done some good aent restoring the *auld religion*." Keith, p. 331.

⁶ See the evidence on which this fact is now stated for the first time in *Proofs and Illustrations*, No. XVI.

been fixed for the week in March in which the parliament had been summoned, it was contrived that this religious solemnity should be held in the capital at the same time: this secured Morton, and enabled him to work with greater boldness.¹

Having so far organised the conspiracy, it remained to communicate it to Moray; and for this purpose the king's father, the Earl of Lennox, repaired to England.² (It required no great persuasion to induce Moray, now in banishment, and over whose head forfeiture and ruin were impending, to embrace a plot which promised to avert all danger, and restore him to the station he had lost.) It was accordingly arranged by him, with Grange, Ochiltree the father-in-law of Knox, and the other banished lords, that as soon as the day for the murder was fixed, they should be informed of it, and then order matters so that their return to Edinburgh should take place instantly after it was committed.³ But this was not all. According to a common but revolting practice of this age, which combined the utmost feudal ferocity with a singular love of legal formalities, it was resolved that "covenants" or contracts for the commission of the murder, and the benefits to be derived from it, should be entered into, and signed by the young king himself and the rest of the conspirators. Two "bands," or "covenants," were accordingly drawn up: the first ran in the king's name alone, although many were parties to it. It stated that the queen's "gentle and good nature" was abused by some wicked and ungodly persons, specially an Italian stranger called David; it declared his resolution, with the assistance of certain of his nobility and others, to seize these enemies; and if

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton and Ruthven to Cecil, 27th March 1566. Knox, History, pp. 429-431.

² Calderwood, MS., British Museum, Ayscough, 4735, fol. 642.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, 25th February 1565, *i.e.*, 1565-6, Randolph to Cecil; also, *Ibid.*, March 8, 1565-6, Berwick. Bedford and Randolph to Leicester and Cecil. *Ibid.*, MS. Letter, Moray to Cecil, Newcastle, March 8, 1565-6.

any difficulty or resistance occurred, "to cut them off immediately, and slay them wherever it happened;" and solemnly promised, on the word of a prince, to maintain and defend his assistants and associates in the enterprise, though carried into execution in presence of the queen's majesty, and within the precincts of the palace.⁴ By whom this agreement was signed, besides the king, Morton, and Ruthven, does not appear; but it is certain that its contents were communicated, amongst others, to Moray, Argyle, Rothes, Maitland, Grange, and the Lords Boyd and Lindsay. Of these persons, some were in England, and could not personally assist in the assassination; and to them, among others, Morton and Ruthven no doubt alluded, when they afterwards declared that the most honest and the most worthy were easily induced to approve of the intended murder, and to support their prince in its execution.⁵ The second "covenant" has been also preserved. It was supplementary to the first, its purpose being to bind the king on the one hand, and the conspirators on the other, to the performance of those conditions which were considered for their mutual advantage. The parties to it were the king, the Earls of Moray, Argyle, Glencairn, and Rothes, the Lords Boyd and Ochiltree, and their "complices." They promised to support Darnley in all his just quarrels, to be friends to his friends, and enemies to his enemies; to give him the crown matrimonial, to maintain the Protestant religion, to put down its enemies, and uphold every reform founded on the Word of God. For his part, the king engaged to pardon Moray and the banished lords, to stay all proceedings for their forfeiture, and to restore them to their lands and dignities.⁶

Such was now the forward state of

⁴ British Museum, Caligula, book ix. fol. 212, copy of the time. Endorsed by Randolph.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton and Ruthven to Cecil, Berwick, March 27, 1566. Also, Keith, p. 120.

⁶ State-paper Office, copy by Randolph from the original: "Conditions for the earls to perform to their king," and "Conditions to

the conspiracy for the murder of Riccio, the restoration of Moray, and the revolution in the government; and it appears to have assumed this form only a few days previous to Randolph's dismissal from the Scottish court. One only step remained : to communicate the plot to the Queen of England and her ministers, and to obtain their approval and support. Randolph was now at Berwick with the Earl of Bedford, the lieutenant of the north ; and from this place these persons wrote on the 6th of March to Elizabeth, informing her of "a matter of no small consequence being intended in Scotland," referring to a more particular statement which they had transmitted to Cecil, adding that Moray would thus be brought home ; that Tuesday was the last day, and that they looked daily to hear of its execution.¹

The other letter from Bedford and Randolph to Cecil, written on the same day, was far more explicit. It enjoined the strictest secrecy : they had promised, they said, upon their honour, that none except the queen, Leicester, and Cecil himself, should be informed of "the great attempt," now on the eve of being put in execution ; and they went on thus to describe it :—

"The matter is this : Somewhat we are sure you have heard of divers discords and jarrings² between this queen and her husband, partly for that she hath refused him the crown matrimonial, partly for that he hath assured knowledge of such usage of herself, as altogether is intolerable to be borne, which, if it were not overwell known, we would both be very loath to think that it could be true. To take away this occasion of slander, he is himself determined to be at the apprehension and execution of him whom he is able manifestly to charge with the crime, and to have done him the most dishonour that can be to any be performed by the King of Scots to the earls." Endorsed in Cecil's hand, Primo Martii, 1565-6.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford and Randolph to the Queen, Berwick, March 1 1565-6.

² Jars.

man, much more being as he is. We need not more plainly to describe the person : you have heard of the man whom we mean of.

"To come by the other thing which he desireth, which is the crown matrimonial, what is devised and concluded upon by him and the noblemen, you shall see by the copies of the conditions between them and him, of which Mr Randolph assureth me to have seen the principals, and taken the copies written with his own hand.

"The time of execution and performance of these matters is before the parliament, as near as it is. To this determination of theirs, there are privy in Scotland these : Argyle, Morton, Boyd, Ruthven, and Lethington. In England these : Moray, Rothes, Grange, myself, and the writer hereof. If persuasions to cause the queen to yield to these matters do no good, they purpose to proceed we know not in what sort. If she be able to make any power at home, she shall be withheld, and herself kept from all other counsel than her own nobility. If she seek any foreign support, the queen's majesty our sovereign shall be sought, and sued unto to accept his and their defence, with offers reasonable to her majesty's contentment. These are the things which we thought and think to be of no small importance ; and knowing them certainly intended, and concluded upon, thought it our duties to utter the same to you Mr Secretary, to make declaration thereof as shall seem best to your wisdom. And of this matter thought to write conjunctly, though we came severally by knowledge, agreeing both in one in the substance of that which is determined. At Berwick, 6th March 1565.³

"F. BEDFORD.

"TH. RANDOLPHE."

I have given this long extract as the letter is of much importance, and has never before been known. It proves that Elizabeth received the

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, March 6, 1565, Berwick. Earl of Bedford and Thomas Randolph to Secretary Cecil, endorsed by Cecil's clerk, *Earl of Bedford and Mr Randolph to my M^r.*

most precise intimation of the intended murder of Riccio; that she was made fully acquainted with the determination to secure the person of the Scottish queen, and create a revolution in the government. Moray's share in the conspiracy, and his consent to the assassination of the foreign secretary, are established by the same letter beyond a doubt; and we see the declared object of the plot was to put an end to his banishment, to replace him in the power which he had lost, and, by one decided and triumphant blow, to destroy the schemes which were in agitation for the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in Scotland. It is of great moment to attend to the conduct of Elizabeth at this crisis. She knew all that was about to occur: the life of Riccio, the liberty—perhaps, too, the life—of Mary was in her hands; Moray was at her court; the conspirators were at her devotion; they had given the fullest information to Randolph, that he might consult the queen: she might have imprisoned Moray, discomfited the plans of the conspirators, saved the life of the miserable victim who was marked for slaughter, and preserved Mary, to whom she professed a warm attachment, from captivity. All this might have been done, perhaps it is not too much to say, that even in these dark times it would have been done, by a monarch acutely alive to the common feelings of humanity. But Elizabeth adopted a very different course: she not only allowed Moray to leave her realm, she dismissed him with marks of the highest confidence and distinction; and this baron, when ready to set out for Scotland, to take his part in those dark transactions which soon after followed, sent his secretary Wood, to acquaint Cecil with the most secret intentions of the conspirators.¹

Whilst these terrible designs were

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, March 8, 1565-6, Newcastle, Moray to Cecil. See also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B. C., Bedford to Cecil, Berwick, March 8, 1565-6. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford and Randolph to Leicester and Cecil, Berwick, March 8, 1565-6.

in preparation against her, some hints of approaching danger were conveyed to the Scottish queen; but she imprudently disregarded them. Riccio, too, received a mysterious caution from Damiot an astrologer, whom he used to consult, and who bade him beware of the bastard, evidently alluding to George Douglas, the natural son of the Earl of Angus, and one of the chief conspirators; but he imagined that he pointed to Moray, then in banishment, and derided his apprehensions.² Meantime everything was in readiness; a large concourse of the friends of the Reformed Church assembled at Edinburgh for the week of fasting and humiliation: directions for prayer and sermons had been previously drawn up by Knox and the ministers, and the subjects chosen were such as seemed calculated to prepare the public mind for resistance, violence, and bloodshed. They were selected from the Old Testament alone, and included, amongst other examples, the slaying of Oreb and Zeeb, the cutting off of the Benjamites, the fasting of Esther, the hanging of Haman, inculcating the duty of inflicting swift and summary vengeance on all who persecuted the people of God.³

On the 3d of March the fast commenced in the capital, and on the 4th parliament assembled. It was opened by the queen in person, and the Lords of the Articles having been chosen, the statute of treason and forfeiture against Moray and the banished lords was prepared. This was on a Thursday; and on Tuesday, in the following week, the act was to be passed; but it was fearfully arrested in its progress.⁴

On Saturday evening, about seven o'clock, when it was dark, the Earls of Morton and Lindsay, with a hundred

² Spottiswood, p. 194.

³ Knox, pp. 340, 341, Treatise on Fasting, &c., a rare Tract. Edinburgh, 1565, Lek-previk. Kindly communicated to me by my friend, Mr James Chalmers; and Goodall, vol. i. pp. 248, 249.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford and Randolph to Leicester and Cecil, Berwick, 8th March 1565-6. Ibid., Same to the queen, 6th March 1565-6

and fifty men bearing torches and weapons, occupied the court of the palace of Holyrood, seized the gates without resistance, and closed them against all but their own friends. At this moment Mary was at supper in a small closet or cabinet, which entered from her bed-chamber. She was attended by the Countess of Argyle, the Commendator of Holyrood, Beaton, master of the household, Arthur Erskine, captain of the guard, and her secretary Riccio. The bed-chamber communicated by a secret turnpike-stair with the king's apartment below, to which the conspirators had been admitted; and Darnley, ascending this stair, threw up the arras which concealed its opening in the wall, entered the little apartment where Mary sat, and, casting his arm fondly round her waist, seated himself beside her at table. A minute had scarcely passed when Ruthven, clad in complete armour, abruptly broke in. This man had just risen from a sick-bed, his features were sunk and pale from disease, his voice hollow, and his whole appearance haggard and terrible. Mary, who was now seven months gone with child, started up in terror, commanding him to be gone; but ere the words were uttered, torches gleamed in the outer room, a confused noise of voices and weapons was heard, and the next moment George Douglas, Car of Faudonside, and other conspirators, rushed into the closet.¹ Ruthven now drew his dagger, and calling out that their business was with Riccio, made an effort to seize him; whilst this miserable victim springing behind the queen, clung by her gown, and in his broken language called out, "Giustizia, Giustizia! sauve ma vie, Madame, sauve ma vie!"² All was now uproar and confusion; and though Mary earnestly implored them to have

¹ Mary to the Bishop of Glasgow, 2d April, 1566. Keith, p. 330. Also, Bedford and Randolph to the Council, 27th March 1566. Ellis, vol. ii., first series, p. 207. Morton and Ruthven's Narrative. Caligula, book ix. fol. 219, more full than that in Keith, App. 120, which is a Copy.

² Birrel's Diary, p. 5.

mercy, they were deaf to her entreaties: the table and lights were thrown down, Riccio was stabbed by Douglas over the queen's shoulder; Car of Faudonside, one of the most ferocious of the conspirators, held a pistol to her breast, and whilst she shrieked with terror, their bleeding victim was torn from her knees, and dragged amidst shouts and execrations through the queen's bed-room, to the entrance of the presence chamber. Here Morton and his men rushed upon him, and buried their daggers in his body. So eager and reckless were they in their ferocity, that in the struggle to get at him, they wounded one another; nor did they think the work complete till the body was mangled by fifty-six wounds, and left in a pool of blood, with the king's dagger sticking in it, to shew, as was afterwards alleged, that he had sanctioned the murder.³

Nothing can more strongly shew the ferocious manners of the times than an incident which now occurred. Ruthven, faint from sickness, and reeking from the scene of blood, staggered into the queen's cabinet, where Mary still stood distracted and in terror of her life. Here he threw himself upon a seat, called for a cup of wine, and being reproached for the cruelty of his conduct, not only vindicated himself and his associates, but plunged a new dagger into the heart of the unhappy queen, by declaring that her husband had advised the whole. She was then ignorant of the completion of the murder, but suddenly one of her ladies rushed into the room and cried out that their victim was slain. "And is it so?" said Mary; "then farewell tears, we must now think of revenge."⁴

³ Drury to Cecil, B.C., Berwick, 27th March 1566, "David had fifty-six wounds, whereof thirty-four were in his back." "Such desire," says Drury, "was to have him surely and speedily slain, that in jabbing at him so many at once, as some bestowed their daggers where neither they meant it not, nor the receivers willing to have it; as one can, for his own good, now in this town, (a follower to my Lord Ruthven,) be too true a testimony, who carries the bag in [on] his hand."

⁴ Morton and Ruthven's Narrative, ut supra. Spottiswood, p. 195.

Having finished the first act of this tragedy, the conspirators proceeded to follow out their preconcerted measures. The queen was kept a prisoner in her apartment, and strictly guarded. The king, assuming the sole power, addressed his royal letters dissolving the parliament, and commanding the estates to leave the capital within three hours, on pain of treason; orders were despatched to the magistrates enjoining them with their city force to keep a vigilant watch, and suffer none but Protestants to leave their houses; and to Morton, the chancellor, with his armed retainers, was intrusted the guarding the gates of the palace, with strict injunction that none should escape from it.¹

This, however, amid the tumult of a midnight murder, was not so easy a task. Huntly and Bothwell contrived to elude the guards. Sir James Balfour and James Melvil were equally fortunate; and as this last gentleman passed beneath the queen's window, she threw up the sash and implored him to warn the citizens to save her from the traitors who had her in their power. Soon after the common bell was heard ringing, so speedily had the message been carried; and the chief magistrate, with a body of armed townsmen, rushed confusedly into the palace court, demanding the instant deliverance of their sovereign. But Mary in vain implored to speak with them; she was dragged back from the window by the ruffians, who threatened to cut her in pieces if she attempted to shew herself; and in her stead the pusillanimous Darnley was thrust forward. He addressed the citizens, assured them that both he and the queen were in safety, and, commanding them on their allegiance to go home, was instantly obeyed.²

Thus ended all hope of rescue; but although baffled in this attempt, secluded even from her women, trembling and justly fearing for her life, the queen's courage and presence of

¹ Morton and Ruthven's Narrative, Keith Appendix, p. 126.

² Mary to Archbishop Beaton, 2d April 1565-6, in Keith, 332. Melvil's Memoirs, p. 150.

mind did not forsake her. She remonstrated with her husband; she even condescended to reason with Ruthven, who replied in rude and upbraiding terms; and at last, exhausted with this effort, she would have sunk down, had they not called for her ladies and left her to repose. Next morning all the horrors of her condition broke fully upon her: she was a prisoner, in the hands of a band of assassins; they were led by her husband, who watched all her motions; he had already assumed the royal power, she was virtually dethroned; who could tell what dark purposes might not be meditated against her person. These thoughts agitated her to excess, and threw her into a fever, in which she imagined the ferocious Ruthven was coming to murder her, and shrieking out that she was abandoned by all, was threatened with miscarriage. The piteous sight revived Darnley's affection; her gentlewomen were admitted, and the danger passed away; yet so strong was the suspicion with which she was guarded, that no lady was allowed to pass "muffled" from the queen's chamber.³

It was now Sunday night, the murder had been committed late on Saturday evening; and, according to their previous concert, Moray, Rothee, and Ochiltree, with others of the banished lords, arrived in the capital and instantly rode to the palace. They were welcomed by Darnley; and so little did Mary suspect Moray's foreknowledge of the murder that she instantly sent for him, and throwing herself into his arms in an agony of tears, exclaimed, "If my brother had been here he never would have suffered me to have been thus cruelly handled." The sight overcame him, and he is reported to have wept; but, if sincere, his compunction was momentary, for from the queen he repaired to Morton, and in a meeting with the whole conspirators it was resolved to shut up their sovereign in Stirling Castle, to compel her to give the crown and the whole government of the realm to

³ Morton and Ruthven's Narrative. Keith, Appendix, pp. 127, 128.

Darnley, and to confirm the Protestant religion, under the penalty of death or perpetual imprisonment.¹

Meanwhile, Mary's spirit and courage revived. She perceived that her influence over her husband was not at an end, and exerting those powers of fascination and persuasive language which she possessed in so high a degree, she succeeded in alarming his fears, and awakening his love. She represented to him that he was surrendering himself a tool into the hands of her enemies and his own : if they had belied her honour, if they had periled her life, and that of his unborn infant, could he believe that, when he alone stood between them and their ambition, they would hesitate to destroy him. Already he might see they took the power into their own hands, and when he sent his servants to her, refused to admit them ; and then the flagrant falsehood of accusing him as a party to so base a murder—a deed which, had he really contemplated, (but this she was assured he never had,) must cover him with infamy in the eyes of the country and of the world. Their only safety lay in escaping together. If, said she, it is your wish, I am ready to forgive even the bloody men whose atrocious act you have just witnessed.—Go and tell them so—but let them treat me as a free queen, let them remove their guards, avoid the palace which they have polluted with blood, and I will sign a written pardon for them on the spot. Darnley was won by her arguments, and becoming terrified for the consequences of the murder, took refuge in falsehood, denied all connexion with the conspiracy, and placed himself in the hands of Mary with the same facility which had lately made him the slave of the conspirators. Ruthven and Morton, however, were not so easily deceived, and insisted that the queen meant only to betray them. The king replied she was a true princess, that he would stake his life for her faith and honour,² and led

the conspirators to her presence, where she heard their defence, assured them of her readiness to pardon, and sent them away to draw up a writing for their security. They did so, delivered the paper to Darnley, left the palace, removed the guards, and permitted the servants of the household to resume their charge. To lull suspicion, the queen retired to rest, and Ruthven and his associates deeming all safe, took themselves to the house of Morton, the chancellor, as we have seen, one of the chief actors in the murder ; but at midnight Mary rose, threw herself upon a fleet horse, and, accompanied only by the king and Arthur Erskine, fled to Dunbar. The news of her escape flew through the land ; her nobles, Huntly, Athole, Bothwell, and multitudes of barons and gentlemen crowded round her ; and in the morning Morton, Ruthven, and the rest of the conspirators awoke only to hear that their victim had eluded their grasp, that an army of her subjects had already assembled at Dunbar, and that the penalties of treason were suspended over their heads.

Mary thus escaped ; and it is impossible to withhold our admiration of the coolness, judgment, and courage exhibited by a woman under the dreadful circumstances in which she was called upon to exert these qualities. (If we blame her duplicity, let it be remembered that her own life, and that of her infant, were in jeopardy;) that there was nothing unreasonable in the idea that the ruffians who had torn her secretary from her knees, and murdered him in her chamber, might, before many hours were over, be induced to repeat the deed upon herself. We may gather, indeed, from the dark and indefinite expressions of Randolph in describing the approaching assassination, that their intentions, if she resisted their wishes, vacillated between murder and perpetual captivity.

Once more free, the queen acted with her usual spirit and decision.

¹ Mary to Beaton. Keith, p. 332.
² This assertion of Darnley, which gives a direct contradiction to the story of Mary's al-

Having regained her ascendancy over the king, she obtained from this weak prince a disclosure of the chief persons engaged in the conspiracy. It would appear, however, that Darnley concealed Moray's guilt, and only denounced Morton, Ruthven, and other associates. Against them the queen took instant steps. She summoned her people to attend her in arms, directed a writ of treason to be issued against the chancellor, Lethington, and their accomplices, and advanced at the head of a force of eight thousand men to the capital.¹ Aware of this, the conspirators fled with the utmost precipitation. Morton, Ruthven, Brunston, and Andrew Car took instant refuge in England; others, scattered hither and thither, concealed themselves in their own country. Knox, in great agony of spirit, and groaning over the Church and his flock, buried himself in the friendly recesses of Kyle, and Lethington hastened to gain the mountain fastnesses of Athole. It was remarkable that Craig, the colleague of Knox, did not leave the city.²

To the English queen, and her brother the Earl of Moray, Mary had a more difficult part to act, whilst she felt equal embarrassment as to the degree of confidence to be given to the king. We have seen incontrovertible proof that Moray was a party to the murder, though not a perpetrator of it; that Elizabeth was accessory to the conspiracy, and that Darnley and his father Lennox were the original contrivers of the whole. But of all this Mary at this moment was ignorant. Elizabeth, on being informed of the outrage, expressed the deepest sympathy and indignation; Moray affected an equal abhorrence of everything that had occurred. (Darnley not only denounced his former friends, but busied himself in bringing them to

¹ Knox, History, p. 437.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Berwick, 21st March 1565. M'Crie's Life of Knox, p. 254. I quote from the new and excellent edition of this work by Dr Crichton. See also Knox's Prayer, dated 12th March 1565-6, subjoined to his answer to Tyrie.

justice.) The queen, therefore, without renouncing her resolution to punish the murder with the utmost rigour, deemed it prudent in the first instance to secure the active assistance of Elizabeth, to strengthen her ties with France, and to promote a reconciliation amongst her nobility, many of whom were at feud with each other. Bothwell, who during the late disturbances had vigorously exerted himself for his sovereign, was the enemy of Moray and Lethington; Athole, with whom Lethington had taken refuge, was at variance with Argyle; and the differences amongst the leading barons, as usual, extended their ramifications through all their retainers and dependants.

It says much for the judgment of the queen that her efforts to compose these fatal differences were successful. Moray and Bothwell were reconciled, Argyle and Athole agreed to suspend their contests, and Mary seemed even disposed to pardon Morton, Lethington, and the principal conspirators, if the extension of mercy could have brought back peace and security to her kingdom.³ But this intended leniency only brought upon her more sorrow. Her weak and treacherous husband became alarmed, and more loudly denounced his late friends who had murdered Riccio. This conduct enraged them to the utmost, and they retaliated by again accusing him, in more distinct and positive terms than before, of being the sole instigator and contriver of the murder. To prove this, they laid the "bands," or covenants before the queen, and the dreadful truth broke upon her in all its sickening and heart-rending force.⁴ She now understood for the first time that the king was the principal conspirator against her, the defamer

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 2d April 1566; and Ibid., Robert Melvil to Cecil, 3d April 1566, Edinburgh.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, April 4, Randolph to Cecil. "The queen hath now seen all the covenants and bands that passed between the king and the lords. And now findeth that his declaration before her and the council of his innocency of the death of David was false."

of her honour, the plotter against her liberty and her crown, the almost murderer of herself and her unborn child; he was convicted as a traitor and a liar, false to his own honour, false to her, false to his associates in crime. At this moment Mary must have felt that to have leant upon a husband whom she could trust might, amid the terrible plots with which she was surrounded, have been the means of saving herself and her crown; but on Darnley she could never lean again. Can we wonder that her heart was almost broken by the discovery—that, to use the words of Melvil, she should have loudly lamented the king's folly and unthankfulness, that she was compelled to withdraw from him all confidence, and in solitary bitterness to act entirely for herself.

But if such were the queen's feelings towards the young king, those of the conspirators whom he had betrayed were of a sterner kind. Even in those flagitious days there were sanctions the disregard of which covered a man with infamy and contempt, and amongst these one of the most sacred was fidelity to the written "bands" by which the feudal barons were bound to each other. To one of these Darnley, as we have seen, had become a principal: his fellow-conspirators had performed their promise: he had not only broken his and denied all accession to the plot, but had betrayed the principal actors, and meanly purchased his own safety by their destruction. The consequence was the utmost indignation, and a thirst for revenge upon the part of Morton, Moray, Lethington, and their associates, which, there is reason to believe, increased in intensity till it was assuaged only in his death. These feelings of indignation were not confined to the fugitive lords. Mary avoided his company, and forbade her friends to give him any countenance. She promoted Joseph Riccio, David's brother, who had arrived in the suite of Mauvissiere, the French ambassador, to the dangerous vacancy caused by the murder;¹ and at last

became so impatient and miserable under the ties by which she was bound to her husband, that she entertained the extraordinary design of retiring to France, and intrusting the government of her kingdom to a regency, composed of five of her principal lords,—Moray, Mar, Huntly, Athole, and Bothwell.² Another scheme which at this moment occupied her mind was the possibility of obtaining a divorce, on which errand it was reported she had sent a messenger, named Thornton, to Rome.³

Her feelings, however, though keen, were not bitter or lasting. As the period of her confinement drew near, her resentment softened towards the king. At this moment her mind had become haunted with the terror that Morton and his savage associates, whose hands were stained with the blood of Riccio, had determined to break in upon her during her labour; but the assurances of the English queen, who sent her word that she had dismissed him from her dominions, (which was not strictly true,) restored her to composure.⁴ Uncertain that she should survive her confinement, she called for her nobility, took measures regarding the government of the kingdom, made her will, became reconciled to the king, and personally arranged everything either for life or death.⁵

On the 19th of June she was delivered of a prince in the castle of Edinburgh, and immediately despatched Sir James Melvil to carry the news to Elizabeth. The English queen received the intelligence with her usual duplicity. From Cecil, who

same to same, B.C., Berwick, April 26, 1566. See also Sir Th. Hoby to Cecil, French Correspondence, State-paper Office, 29th April 1566.

² MS. Letter, copy, Lethington to Randolph, 27th April 1566. Caligula, book ix. fol. 244.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Berwick, April 25, 1566, Randolph to Cecil.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Berwick, June 13, 1566, Randolph to Cecil. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, July 4, 1566, Killigrew to Cecil. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Cecil, 24th June 1566.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Berwick, Randolph to Cecil, 7th June 1566.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Berwick, April 20, 1566, Drury to Cecil. Also

saw her before Melvil was admitted, and whispered the unwelcome news in her ear as she was dancing at Greenwich, after supper, she could not conceal her feelings. All mirth was at an end, she sat down, leant her cheek on her hand, and then burst forth in lamentations to her ladies, that she was a barren stock, whilst the Queen of Scots was the mother of a fair son. When Melvil had audience next morning, everything was serene. His tidings, she said, gave her the utmost joy, and had cured her of a fifteen days' sickness. She promised also, in reply to his urgent request, that there should be a speedy settlement of the question of the succession.¹

Meanwhile Mary recovered, and assured of the continuance of amicable relations with England, applied herself with her usual energy to heal the dissensions amongst her nobles, to conduct internal tranquillity and to re-establish a firm government. The great difficulty was the conduct to be pursued with Morton and the banished lords; and the queen soon became convinced that she must sacrifice her own feelings and adopt a lenient course, if she wished to recover her power. Amongst her nobility there was no want of talents or energy; the difficulty was to attach them to the crown, to heal their feuds amongst themselves, to prevent their intrigues with England. So long as Lethington was in disgrace, and the murderers of Riccio were banished, these ends could not be gained. The queen, therefore, listened to the intercession of Moray, whom she now treated with great confidence. Lethington was reconciled to Bothwell, and pardoned; the Lairds of Brunston, Ormiston, Hatton, and Calder, the leaders of the Church party, were received into favour; but Knox still continued in his retreat, and there appears to have been some special rigour manifested against him on the part of the queen.² Morton, the arch-conspirator, with his assist-

ants, Lindsay and Ruthven, were still proscribed; but Moray, Bothwell, Argyll, Athole, and Lethington, who now acted together, exerted themselves unremittingly to procure their restoration, and the queen, it was evident, began to think of permitting their return.³

This intended mercy enraged the young king, and appears to have driven him upon foolish and dangerous courses: as his opponents were mostly Protestants, he began to intrigue with the Romanists, and went so far as to write secretly to the Pope, arraigning the conduct of the queen, in delaying to restore the mass. When his letters were intercepted, and his practices discovered, he complained bitterly of the neglect into which he had fallen, affirmed that he had no share in the government, accused the nobles of a plot against his life, and at last formed the desperate resolution of leaving the kingdom, and remonstrating to foreign powers against the cruelty with which he was treated.⁴ This mad project alarmed his father, Lennox, who communicated his fears to the queen, and Mary made an earnest attempt to restore him to his duty. The interview and remonstrances to which this led are of much importance in estimating the dark charges afterwards brought against Mary; and we fortunately know the whole particulars from the Lords of the Council, before whom it took place, and also from the French ambassador, De Croc, who was present. The queen, it appears, had at first affectionately, and in private, implored Darnley to disclose the causes of his grief. "The queen," said the Lords of the Council, addressing the queen-mother,⁵ "condescended so far as to go and meet the king without the palace, and so conducted him into her

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Cecil, September 19, 1566.

⁴ Monsieur de Croc's Letter to Archbishop Beaton, printed by Keith, p. 345, from the original, then in the Scots College, Paris.

⁵ Lords of the Privy-council to the Queen-mother, October 8, 1566. Keith, p. 347, being a translation from a copy then in the Scots College at Pt. 2.

1 MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Cecil, 24th June 1566, Melvil's Memoirs, Bannatyne edit., p. 161.

2 M'Crie's Life of Knox, p. 234.

own apartment, where he remained all night; and then her majesty entered calmly with him upon the subject of his going abroad, that she might understand from himself the occasion of such a resolution. But he would by no means give or acknowledge that he had any occasion offered him of discontent. The Lords of the Council, being acquainted early next morning that the king was just agoing to return to Stirling, they repaired to the queen's apartment, and no other persons being present, except their lordships, and Monsieur de Croc, whom they prayed to assist with them, as being here on the part of your majesty."

The occasion of their meeting together was then, with all humility and reverence due to their majesties, proposed—namely, to understand from the king, whether, according to advice imparted to the queen by the Earl of Lennox, he had formed a resolution to depart by sea out of the realm, and on what ground, and for what end? That if his resolution proceeded from some discontent, they were earnest to know what persons had afforded an occasion for the same? That if he could complain of any of the subjects of the realm, be they of what quality whatsoever, the fault should be immediately repaired to his satisfaction. "And here," they continued, "we did remonstrate to him, that his own honour, the queen's honour, the honour of us all, were concerned; for if, without just occasion ministered, he would retire from the place where he had received so much honour, and abandon the society of her to whom he is so far obliged, that in order to advance him she has humbled herself, and from being his sovereign had surrendered herself to be his wife; if he should act in this sort, the whole world would blame him as ingrate, regardless of the friendship the queen bare him, and utterly unworthy to possess the place to which she had exalted him. On the other hand, that if any just occasion had been given him, it behoved the same to be very important, since it inclined him to relinquish

so beautiful a queen, and noble realm; and the same must have been afforded him either by the queen herself, or by us her ministers. As for us, we professed ourselves ready to do him all the justice he could demand. And for her majesty, so far was she from ministering to him occasion of discontent, that on the contrary, he had all the reason in the world to thank God for giving him so wise and virtuous a person, as she had shewed herself in all her actions."

"Then her majesty," so the letter goes, "was pleased to enter into the discourse, and spoke affectionately to him, beseeching him, that seeing he would not open his mind in private to her the last night, according to her most earnest request, he would, at least, be pleased to declare, before these lords, where she had offended him anything. She likewise said, that she had a clear conscience, that in all her life she had done no action which could any way prejudge either his or her own honour; but nevertheless, that as she might perhaps have given him offence without design, she was willing to make amends as far as he should require, and therefore prayed him not to dissemble the occasion of his displeasure, if any he had, nor to spare her in the least matter. But though the queen and all others that were present, together with Monsieur de Croc, used all the interest they were able, to persuade him to open his mind, yet he would not at all own that he intended any voyage, or had any discontent, and declared freely that the queen had given him no occasion for any."¹ Such is the account given of this important interview by the Lords of the Council; and Monsieur de Croc, in writing a week afterwards to the Archbishop of Glasgow, Mary's ambassador in France, was equally explicit in describing the affectionate conduct of the queen, and the strange and wayward proceedings of Darnley. He then added this remarkable sentence

¹ Lords of the Privy-council to the Queen-mother. Keith, p. 347. The letter is dated October 8, 1566.

"It is in vain to imagine that he shall be able to raise any disturbance; for there is not one person in all this kingdom, from the highest to the lowest, that regards him any farther than is agreeable to the queen. And I never saw her majesty so much beloved, esteemed, and honoured; nor so great a harmony amongst all her subjects, as at present is, by her wise conduct; for I cannot perceive the smallest difference or division."¹

Yet neither the temperate conduct of the queen, the remonstrances of the council, nor the neglect into which he found himself daily sinking, produced any amendment in Darnley. He persisted in his project of leaving the kingdom; denounced Lethington, the justice-clerk Bellenden, and Makgill the clerk-register, as principal conspirators against Riccio; insisted that they should be deprived of their offices; and became an object of dislike and suspicion not only to Mary, but to all that powerful and now united party, by whom she was surrounded.² Its leaders, Moray, Lethington, Argyle, and Bothwell, saw in him the bitter opponent of Morton's pardon. The faction of the Church hated him for his intrigues with Rome;³ Cecil and the party of Elizabeth suspected him of practices with the English Roman Catholics;⁴ the Hamiltons had always looked on him with dislike, as an obstacle between them and their hopes of succession; and the queen bitterly repented that she was tied to a wayward and intemperate person, who had already endangered her life and her crown, and was constantly thwarting every measure which promised the restoration of tranquillity and good government.

¹ Letter from Monsieur de Croc to Archbishop Beaton, dated October 15, 1566, published by Keith, p. 346, being a translation from the original then in the Scots College, Paris.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Cecil, May 16, 1566, Alnwick. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, May 13, 1566, Berwick.

³ Knox's History, p. 348. Glasgow edition, by M'Gavin, 1832.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Rogers to Cecil, July 5, 1566, Oxford.

When such was the state of matters between the king and queen, disturbances broke out upon the Borders, and rendered it necessary for Mary to repair in person to these districts, for the purpose of holding courts for the trial of delinquents.⁵ Her lieutenant, or warden of the Borders, at this time, was the Earl of Bothwell; and him she despatched, at the head of a considerable force, to reduce the Elliots, Armstrongs, and other offenders, to something like subjection, before she herself repaired to the spot. (So far as this task went, Bothwell was well fitted for it.) (He was of high rank, possessed a daring and martial spirit, and his unshaken attachment to her interests, at a time when the queen had suffered from the desertion of almost every other servant, made him a favourite with a princess who esteemed bravery and fidelity above all other virtues.) But unfortunately for Mary, he possessed other and more dangerous qualities.⁶ His ambition and audacity were unbounded. He was a man of notorious gallantry, and had spent a loose life on the Continent from which, it was said, he had imported some of its worst vices. In attaining the objects of his ambition he was perfectly unscrupulous as to the means he employed, and he had generally about him a band of broken and desperate men, with whom his office of Border warden made him familiar; hardened and murderous villains, who were ready on the moment to obey every command of their master. In one respect, Bothwell was certainly better than many of his brother nobles. There seems to have been little craft or hypocrisy about him, and he made no attempt to conceal his infirmities or vices under the cloak of religion.) It is not unlikely, that for this reason Mary, who had experienced his fidelity to the crown, was more disposed to trust

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Cecil, Carlisle, October 6, 1566. Also Ibid., B.C., same to same, October 8, 1566.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, September 20, 1565.

him in any difficulty, than those stern and fanatical leaders, who, with religion on their lips, were often equally indifferent as to the means which they employed. It is certain, that from this time she began to treat him with great favour, and to be guided by a preference so predominant, that it was not unlikely to be mistaken for a more tender feeling. This partiality of the queen for Bothwell was early detected by Moray, Lethington, and their associates: they observed that his vanity was flattered by the favour shewn him by his sovereign; they artfully fanned the flame, and encouraged an ambition, already daring enough, to aspire to a height which he had never dreamt of; and it is the opinion of Sir James Melvil, who spoke from personal observation, that Bothwell's plot for the murder of his sovereign, and the possession of the queen's person, had its origin about this time, when she despatched him to suppress the disturbances in Liddesdale.¹

After the singular scene before the privy-council and the French ambassador, the king left the court; and the queen, accompanied by her ministers and the officers of her household, set out on her progress to the Borders. At this moment these districts were in a state of great disorder; a feud raged between the Armstrongs and the Johnstons, two of the fiercest and most numerous septs in that part of the country.² The arrival of Bothwell, the queen's lieutenant, with a commission to reduce them to obedience, rather increased the disturbances, and in an attempt to apprehend Elliot of Park, a notorious marauder, the earl was grievously wounded, and left for dead on the field. An account of the sanguinary skirmish in which this happened, was immediately sent by Lord Scrope to Secretary Cecil. "I have," said he, "presently gotten

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 170, 173. Melvil, who wrote probably from memory, erroneously places the baptism of the prince before the skirmish in Liddesdale, when Bothwell was wounded.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Cecil, Carlisle, October 6, 1566.

intelligence out of Scotland, that the Earl of Bothwell, being in Liddesdale for the apprehension of certain disordered persons there, had apprehended the Lairds of Mangerton and Whitehaugh, with sundry other Armstrongs of their surname and kindred, whom he had put within the Hermitage.³ And yesterday, going about to take such like persons of the Elliots, in pursuit of them his lordship being foremost, and far before his company, encountered one John Elliot of the Park, hand to hand, and shot him through the thigh with a dag,⁴ upon which wound the man feeling himself in peril of death, with a two-handed sword assailed the earl so cruelly, that he killed him ere he could get any rescue or succour of his men."⁵ Bothwell, however, though severely wounded, was not slain as at first reported, but having revived, was carried off the field to his castle of the Hermitage.

This accident happened on the 7th of October, and on the next day, the 8th, the queen arrived at Jedburgh, and opened her court.⁶ The proceedings against the various delinquents who were brought before it, occupied her uninterruptedly until the 15th, on which day she rode to the Hermitage, and visited the Earl of Bothwell, who lay there confined by his wounds. The object of the visit appears to have been to hold a conference with the earl on the state of that disturbed district of which he was the governor. Mary was accompanied by Moray and others of her officers, in whose presence she communicated with Bothwell: afterwards, on the same day, she returned to Jedburgh;⁷ and Lord Scrope, who immediately informed Cecil of the visit, added the precise information, that she had remained two hours at the castle, to Both-

³ A strong castle in that district.

⁴ A pistol.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Scrope to Cecil, Carlisle, October 8, 1566. Also MS. Letter, Ibid., Sir John Forster to Cecil, October 23, 1566, Berwick.

⁶ Chalmers, vol i. p. 190, 4to edition.

⁷ Caligula, b. iv. 104, dorso. Fragment of a contemporary history of Mary Queen of Scots in French.

well's great pleasure and contentment.¹

Such a visit was undoubtedly a flattering mark of regard paid by a sovereign to a subject; but he was of high rank and in high office, he had nearly lost his life in the execution of his duty, and he was a favourite with the queen.

Immediately after her return, Mary was seized with a dangerous fever, which ran its course with an alarming rapidity, and for ten days caused the physicians to despair of her life. Its origin was traced by some to the fatigue of her long ride to the Hermitage; but her secretary Lethington, with greater probability, in a letter written to Beaton, the Scottish ambassador in France, ascribed her illness to distress of mind, occasioned by the cruel and ungrateful conduct of the king.² "The occasion of the queen's sickness," said he, "so far as I can understand, is caused of thought and displeasure; and I trow, by what I could wring further of her own declaration to me, the root of it is the king. For she has done him so great honour without the advice of her friends, and contrary to the advice of her subjects, and he, on the other hand, has recompensed her with such ingratitude, and misuses himself so far towards her, that it is a heart-break to her to think that he should

¹ MS. Life of Mary Queen of Scots.—"Sa majesté fut requise et conseillé d'aller visiter en une maison appellé Hermitage, pour entendre de lui l'estat des affaires de pays de quel le dit Sieur [Bothwell] estoit gouverneur hereditairement. Pour ceste occasion elle y alla en diligence, accompagnée du Comte de Murray, et autres seigneurs, en présence desquels elle communiqua avec le dit Sieur Compte, et s'en retourna le mesme jour à Jedwood, où le lendemain elle tomba malade."

Caligula, b. iv. 104, dorso.

Laing in his account of this visit, and the arguments he deduces from it, has implicitly adopted the mistakes of Buchanan, and derides the account of my grandfather in his *Vindication of Queen Mary*, which is far nearer the truth than his own. The letter of Lord Scrope to Cecil, written at the moment, and not known to either of these authors, gives us the whole truth.

² Sloan MSS., British Museum, 3199, fol. 141, Lethington to Archbishop Beaton, Oct. 24, 1566.

be her husband, and how to be free of him she has no outgait."³

During this alarming sickness, Mary believed herself dying, and an interesting account of her behaviour has come down to us from her confidential servants who were present, Secretary Lethington, the Bishop of Ross, and the French ambassador, De Croc. She expressed her entire resignation to the will of God, she exhorted her nobility in pathetic terms to remain in unity and peace with each other, employing their utmost diligence in the government of the kingdom and the education of her son; she sent her affectionate remembrances by De Croc to the French king and her relatives in that country, and declared her constant mind to die in the Catholic faith.⁴ To the great joy of those around her at this moment, she recovered, and although much weakened, proceeded in her progress to Kelso, and thence by Dunbar to Craigmillar, near Edinburgh.

But if there was a recovery of bodily health, there was no return to peace of mind. During the height of her illness, the king had never come to see her, and a visit which he made when the danger was past, produced no effect in removing their unhappy estrangement.⁵ At this moment her condition, as described by an eye-witness, Monsieur de Croc, was pitiable and affecting. She seemed to have fallen into a profound melancholy. "The queen," said this ambassador, writing to the Archbishop of Glasgow, on the 2d December, "is for the present at Craigmillar, about a league distant from this city. She is in the hands of the physicians, and I do assure you is not at all well; and I do believe the principal part of her

³ Sloan MSS., British Museum, 3199, fol. 141. Lethington to Archbishop Beaton, Oct. 24, 1566. Outgait—way of getting out.

⁴ Letter, Lesley, Bishop of Ross, to the Archbishop of Glasgow, Jedburgh, Oct. 27, 1566. Keith, Appendix, No. xiv. p. 134. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Oct. 24, 1566, Lethington to Cecil; also the Council to Archbishop Beaton, Oct. 23, 1566. Keith, Appendix, No. xiv. p. 133.

⁵ Extract in Keith, p. 352, from a letter of De Croc's, dated 24th October 1566.

disease to consist of a deep grief and sorrow. Nor does it seem possible to make her forget the same. Still she repeats these words, ‘I could wish to be dead.’ You know very well that the injury she has received is exceeding great, and her majesty will never forget it. The king her husband came to visit her at Jedburgh, the very day after Captain Hay went away. He remained there but one single night, and yet in that short time I had a great deal of conversation with him. He returned to see the queen about five or six days ago; and the day before yesterday he sent word to desire me to speak with him half a league from this, which I complied with, and found that things go still worse and worse. I think he intends to go away to-morrow, but in any event, I am much assured, as I have always been, that he won’t be present at the baptism. To speak my mind freely to you, (but I beg you not to disclose what I say in any place that may turn to my prejudice,) I do not expect, upon several accounts, any good understanding between them, unless God effectually put to His hand. I shall only name two: the first reason is, the king will never humble himself as he ought; the other is, the queen can’t perceive any one nobleman speaking with the king, but presently she suspects some contrivance among them.”¹

At this moment, when matters between the king and queen were in so miserable a state, the faction opposed to Darnley, which was led by Moray, Lethington, and Bothwell, held a consultation with Huntly and Argyle at Craigmillar, and there proposed a scheme to Mary for putting an end to her sorrows. This was to unite their efforts to procure a divorce between her and her husband, stipulating as a preliminary that she should pardon the Earl of Morton and his accomplices in the murder of Riccio. When their

¹ Translation by Keith, from part of an original letter of Monsieur de Croc’s, dated 2d December 1566, preserved at that time amongst the MSS. of the Scots College at Paris. Keith, p. vii. of his Prefatory matter.

design was first intimated by these noblemen to the queen, she professed her willingness to consent to it, under the conditions that the process of divorce should be legal, and that its effect should not prejudice the rights of her son. It was remarked that, after the divorce, Darnley had better live in a remote part of the country, at a distance from the queen, or retire to France. Upon which Mary relenting, drew back from the proposal, expressed a hope that he might return to a better mind, and professed her own willingness to pass into France and remain there till he acknowledged his faults. To this Maitland the secretary made this remarkable reply, hinting darkly that, rather than subject their queen to such an indignity as retiring from her kingdom, it would be better to substitute murder for divorce: “Madam,” said he, “soucy² ye not we are here of the principal of your grace’s nobility and council, that shall not find the mean³ well to make your majesty quit of him without prejudice of your son; and albeit that my Lord of Moray, here present, be little less scrupulous for a Protestant nor [than] your grace is for a Papist, I am assured he will look through his fingers thereto, and will behold our doings, and say nothing thereto.”⁴ This speech alarmed the queen, who instantly replied, that it was her pleasure nothing should be done by which any spot might be laid upon her honour. “Better,” said she, “permit the matter remain in the state it is, abiding till God in His goodness put remedy thereto, [than] that ye believing to do me service may possibly turn to my hurt or displeasure.” To this Lethington replied, “Madam, let us to guide the business among us, and your grace shall see nothing but good, and approved by parliament.”⁵

² French,—mind ye not, *se soucier*.

³ In original the *moyen*.

⁴ Anderson’s Collections, vol. iv. p. 192; and contemporary copy, State-paper Office.

⁵ Ibid., p. 188, from a copy. Cotton MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. i. f. 282 Protestation of the Earls of Huntly and Argyle, touching the murder of the King of Scots. There is a contemporary copy.

Such was this extraordinary conversation, and it is certainly difficult to determine its precise import. It appears to me that the first part alluded solely to the divorce, and that the second proposition hinted at the murder, though darkly, yet in terms which could scarcely have been misunderstood by any who were present.¹ It is certain that the queen commanded Moray, Bothwell, and their associates to abandon all thoughts of any such design; but it had been glanced at, she was put upon her guard, and difficult or impossible as it might have been at once to dismiss these leading nobles from her councils, precautions might have been taken to defeat their abominable purpose. It is possible, however, that Mary considered her express command sufficient.

This, however, was but a feeble barrier in these cruel times. The conspiracy proceeded; and, in the usual fashion of the age, a band or agreement for the murder of Darnley was drawn up at Craigmillar, of which instrument Bothwell kept possession. It was said to have been written by James Balfour, afterwards President of the Supreme Court, and then a daring and profligate follower of this nobleman; it was signed by Lethington, Huntly, Argyle, and Sir James Balfour; it declared their resolution to cut off the king as a young fool and tyrant, who was an enemy to the nobility, and had conducted himself in an intolerable manner to the queen, and stipulated that, according to feudal usage, they should all stand by each other and defend the deed as a measure of state, resolved on by the chief councillors of the realm, and necessary for the preservation of their own lives.²

varying in a few words, in the State-paper Office.

¹ Instructions and Articles, by the Lords Huntly, Argyle, &c., to John Bishop of Ross, Robert Lord Boyd, &c., Goodall, vol. ii. p. 359.

² The existence of a bond for the murder of the king is proved by Ormiston's confession, (Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, pp. 511, 512,) who says he saw the bond in Bothwell's hands, and describes its contents, affirming that it

Soon after this, the Earl of Bedford arrived from England, to attend the baptism of the young prince; and it was remarked, that although Bothwell was a Protestant, the arrangement of the ceremony was committed to him.³ The Scottish queen had requested Elizabeth to be godmother to her son; and this princess having appointed the Countess of Argyle to be her representative,⁴ despatched Bedford with a font of gold, which she expressed some fear that the little prince might have overgrown. "If you find it so," said she, "you may observe that our good sister has only to keep it for the next, or some such merry talk."⁵

On the 17th of December the baptism of the young prince took place with much magnificence at Stirling. The ceremony was performed according to the Roman ritual, by the Archbishop of St Andrews, and the royal infant received the names of Charles James.⁶

Mary upon this occasion exerted herself to throw off the melancholy by which she was oppressed, and received

was signed by Huntly, Argyle, Lethington, and Sir James Balfour, and that Bothwell told him many more had promised their assistance. This contract was, he adds, devised by Sir James Balfour, and subscribed by them all a quarter of a year before the deed was done. Ormiston in another part of his confession observes, that Bothwell broke to him the purpose for the murder on the Friday before; and when he expressed reluctance to have any concern in it, he said. "Tush, Ormiston, ye need not take fear of this, for the whole lords have concluded the same lang syne, in Craigmillar, all that was there with the queen." The same bond is minutely alluded to in a contemporary life of Mary, written in French, apparently by one of her domestics, who, although biased, seems to have had good opportunities of observation. Caligula, book iv. folio 104, dorso. See also Answer of Lord Herries at York to Moray's "Eik," or Additional Accusation. Goodall, Appendix, vol. ii. p. 212.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Forster to Cecil, 11th December 1566, Berwick.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, ult. October 1566, Minute in Cecil's hand, from the Queen's Majesty to the Countess of Argyle.

⁵ Instructions to Bedford, November 7, 1566, Caligula, book x. 384, a copy.

⁶ Letter from De Croc to the Archbishop of Glasgow, Stirling, 23d December 1566, Keith, p. vii. of his Prefatory matter

the foreign ambassadors and her noble guests with those winning and delightful manners, of which even her enemies felt the fascination ; but the secret grief that preyed upon her could not be concealed. "The queen," said De Croc, writing to Beaton, the Scottish ambassador at the French court, " behaved herself admirably well all the time of the baptism, and shewed so much earnestness to entertain all the goodly company in the best manner, that this made her forget in a good measure her former ailments. But I am of the mind that she will give us some trouble as yet ; nor can I be brought to think otherwise so long as she continues so penitive and melancholy. She sent for me yesterday, and I found her laid on a bed weeping sore, and she complained of a grievous pain in her side."¹

From the baptism of his son the king absented himself, although he was then living in the palace. The causes of this strange conduct were no doubt to be found in his sullen and jealous temper ; the coldness between him and the queen, and the ill-disguised hostility with which he was regarded by Bothwell, Moray, and the ruling party at court, who were now busy labouring for the recall of Morton, so recently Darnley's associate in the murder of Riccio, but now his most bitter enemy. De Croc, the French ambassador, in his letter to Bishop Beaton, describing the baptism, observed that the king's conduct at this time was so incurable, that no good could be expected of him. It is of importance to mark his expressions. "The king," said he, "had still given out that he would depart two days before the baptism, but when the time came on he made no sign of removing at all, only he still kept close within his own apartment. The very day of the baptism he sent three several times, desiring me either to come and see him, or to appoint him an hour that he might come to me in my lodgings. So that I found myself obliged at last to signify to him, that seeing he was in no good correspond-

ence with the queen, I had it in charge from the most Christian king to have no conference with him. And I caused tell him likewise, that as it would not be very proper for him to come to my lodgings, because there was such a crowd of company there, so he might know that there were two passages to it ; and if he should enter by the one, I should be constrained to go out by the other. His bad deportment is incurable, nor can there be any good expected from him for several reasons, which I might tell you, was I present with you. I can't pretend to foretell how all may turn, but I will say that matters cannot subsist long as they are, without being accompanied with sundry bad consequences."²

It had long been evident that Mary's enmity to the Earl of Morton and his associates, who had been banished for the murder of Riccio, was much softened ; and soon after the baptism she consented to pardon them at the earnest entreaty of Moray, Bothwell, and their associates.³ She excepted, indeed, from this act of mercy two marked delinquents, George Douglas, who had stabbed Riccio over her shoulder, and Andrew Car of Faudonside, who had presented a pistol to her breast ; but Morton, Lindsay, Ruthven, and seventy-six other persons were pardoned ; and so highly did the king resent and dread their return, that he abruptly left the court and took up his residence with his father, Lennox, at Glasgow. Soon after this he was seized with a disease which threw out pustules over his body ; and a report arose that he had been poisoned. The rumour cannot excite wonder when we recollect the bond for the murder of the unhappy prince, which had been entered into at Craigmillar, and which its authors, who occupied the chief places about the queen, only awaited a safe opportunity to execute. But in the present case rumour spoke false, for the disease proved to be the small-pox, and the

² De Croc to Beaton, Stirling, December 23, 1566, quoted by Keith in his Prefatory matter, p. vii.

³ Bedford to Cecil, original, State-paper Office, December 30, 1566.

queen immediately despatched her own physician to attend him.¹ It was impossible, however, that he should receive much sympathy either from Mary or her ministers. His actions lately had been marked by continued perversity and weakness. Whilst the queen had been exerting herself for some months to reconcile her nobles, to secure the amity of England, and, by a judicious extension of mercy to Morton and his friends, to restore tranquillity and peace to the country, Darnley appears to have been occupied with perpetual intrigues and plots. Not contented with his secret correspondence with Rome, and the Roman Catholics in England, he was reported to entertain a project for crowning the young prince and seizing the government; and he exhibited, with his father, Lennox, a fixed resolution to thwart all the measures of the queen, and give her perpetual vexation and alarm.² In all these enterprises there was so much inconsistency and jealousy—so evident an inability to carry any plot into successful execution, and yet such a perverse desire to create mischief—that the queen, in addressing her ambassador in France at this moment, expressed herself towards him with much severity. “As for the king our husband,” said she, “God knows always our part towards him; and his behaviour and thankfulness to us is equally well known to God and the world, especially our own indifferent subjects see it, and in their hearts we doubt not condemn the same. Always we perceive him occupied, and busy enough to have inquisition of our doings; which, God willing, shall always be such as none shall have occasion to be offended with them, or to report of us any ways but honourably, however he, his father, and their fautors speak, which we know want no good will to make us have ado, if their power were

equivalent to their minds. But God moderates their forces well enough, and takes the means of the execution of their pretences from them; for, as we believe, they shall find none or very few approvers of their counsels and devices imagined to our displeasure and misliking.”³

When this letter was written, the king, as we have seen, lay at Glasgow;⁴ and, much about the same time, an incident occurred at Berwick, which appears to me to connect itself with the conspiracy to which he soon after fell a victim. In Mary’s service there were two Italians, Joseph Riccio and Joseph Lutyni. Joseph Riccio was brother to the unhappy secretary David. He had arrived in Scotland soon after his brother’s murder, and had been promoted by Mary to the office which it left vacant.⁵ All that we know regarding him is, that the queen treated him with favour; and Lennox, after the assassination of his son the king, publicly named him as one of the murderers. Of Lutyni we know nothing, except that he was a gentleman in the queen’s household, and an intimate friend of Joseph Riccio. This Lutyni, Mary now sent on a mission to France, (6th January 1566-7); but he had only reached Berwick, when she despatched urgent letters, directing that he should be instantly apprehended and brought back to Scotland, as he was a thief, and had absconded with money.⁶ Sir

³ Mary to Bishop Beaton, 20th January, ut supra, Keith, p. viii., Preface.

⁴ Bedford to Cecil, Berwick, original, State-paper Office, 9th January 1566-7. “The estate of all things there [Scotland] is as it was wont to be, and the agreement between the queen and her husband nothing amended, as you shall hear further when I come. The king is now at Glasgow with his father, and there lyeth full of the small-pocks, to whom the queen hath sent her physician.”

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, April 25, 1566.

⁶ Lutyni’s passport is dated 6th January 1566-7, contemporary copy from original, State-paper Office, sent by Drury to Cecil, referred to in a MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., dated January 23, 1566; i.e., 1566-7. He was ordered to be arrested by a letter from Mary, dated January 17, 1566-7. Transcript from original, State-paper Office, and copy of passport

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford to Cecil, January 9, 1566, *i.e.*, 1566-7.

² Examination of William Rogers, original, State-paper Office, 16th January 1566-7. Keith, p. 348, quoting Knox in note 6. Also Mary’s letter to Beaton, January 20, 1566-7, in Keith’s Prefatory matter, p. viii.

William Drury, marshal of Berwick, to whom these letters were addressed, on examining him, appears to have found upon his person, or someway to have got possession of, a letter written to him by his friend Joseph Riccio; and its contents convinced Drury that the Scottish queen dreaded the disclosure of some important secret of which Lutyni had possessed himself. Alluding to Mary's letter, and the discrepancy between the slight reasons assigned for his apprehension and her great anxiety to have him again in her hands, Drury observed to Cecil, "And therefore giveth me to think, by that I can gather as well of the matter as of the gentleman, that it is not it [the money] that the queen seeketh so much, as to recover his person; for I have learned the man had credit there, and now the queen mistrusteth lest he should offer his service here in England, and thereby might, with better occasion, utter something either prejudicial to her, or that she would be loth should be disclosed but to those she pleaseth."¹

Riccio's letter was certainly fitted to rouse these suspicions. He told Lutyni that they were both vehemently blamed, that they were accused of acting a double part, and that Lutyni in particular was railed at as having been prying into the queen's private papers; and he implored him when examined on his return, as he valued his own safety and his friend's life, to adhere to a certain story, which he (Riccio) had already told the queen. On interrogating Lutyni, Drury found him in the greatest alarm, affirming, that if he were sent back to Scotland, it would be to "a prepared death."² Upon this he consulted Cecil, and received orders not to deliver him up, but to detain him at Berwick. The whole circumstances are exceedingly obscure; but it appears to me certain, from Riccio's letter, that Lutyni had become acquainted through him with some secret, the betrayal of which

was a matter of life or death; that Mary suspected that he had stolen or read some of her private papers; that she had determined to examine him herself upon this point; and that everything depended on his deceiving the queen on his return, by adhering to the tale which had been already told her. In what other way are we to understand these expressions of Riccio to Lutyni? ". . . Se voi dite cosi come vi mando sarete scusato, e io ancora. La Regina vi manda ci pigliare per parlar con voi, pigliate guardia a voi che voi la cognoscete pigliate guardia che non v'abuzzi delle sue parole come voi sapete bene; e n'ha detto che vuol parlare a voi in segreto e pigliate guardia delli dire come vi ho scritto, e non altramente, a fin che nostra parola si confronti l'una a l'altra, e ne voi ne io non saremo in pena nessuna, . . . e vi prego di aver pieta di me, e non voler esser causa della mia morte."³ When it is considered that at this moment Bothwell, Lethington, and their accomplices had resolved on the king's death; when we recollect the conference at Craigmillar, in which they had hinted their intentions to the queen, and had been commanded by her to do nothing that would touch her honour; when we know that Bothwell, who was at this time in the highest favour with Mary, was the custodier also of the written bond for the murder of Darnley, there appears to me to be a presumption that Joseph Riccio, who must have hated the king as the principal assassin of his brother, had joined the plot; that his terrors arose out of his having revealed to Lutyni the conspiracy for Darnley's murder, and that the queen, suspecting it, had resolved to secure his person. This, however, is only presumption, and the letter might relate to some other state secret. But we shall again meet with Lutyni and Riccio; and meanwhile I proceed to those dreadful scenes which so soon followed the baptism of the prince-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 23d January 1566-7, Berwick.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, February 7, 1566-7.

³ See the whole Letter in Proofs and Illustrations, No. XVII. It is in the State-paper Office. Endorsed in Cecil's own hand, "Joseph Riccio, Queen of Scots' servant."

and the pardon of the Earl of Morton.

When this nobleman returned in the beginning of January 1566-7, from his banishment in England, Darnley still lay in a weakly state of health at Glasgow. On his road to Edinburgh, Morton took up his residence at Whittingham, the seat of Archibald Douglas, his near relative, and soon after was joined there by the Earl of Bothwell and Secretary Lethington.¹ The object of this visit was immediately explained by Bothwell, who, in the presence of Archibald Douglas, acquainted Morton with their determination to murder the king; and added, as an inducement for him to join the plot, that the queen had consented to his death. The atrocious proposal was declined by Morton, not influenced by any feelings of horror, which, from his character, he was not likely to give way to, but on other grounds. He was unwilling, he said, to meddle with new troubles, when he had scarcely got rid of an old offence.² Archibald Douglas then earnestly exhorted him to join the plot; and Bothwell, in a second interview, to which Lethington was admitted, reiterated his arguments, and insisted that all was done at the queen's desire. "Bring me, then," said Morton, "the queen's handwriting for a warrant, and you shall have my answer." Upon this Douglas accompanied Lethington and Bothwell to Edinburgh, and soon after he received an order from Lethington to return to Whittingham, and tell Morton that the queen would receive no speech of the matter appointed unto him.³ Douglas complaining of the brevity and obscurity of this message, Lethington

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Cecil, from Berwick, 10th January 1566-7. MS. Letter, B.C., Drury to Cecil, January 23, 1566-7. Morton arrived at Whittingham some time between the 9th and the 23d of January.

² Morton's Confession in Bannatyne's Memorials, p. 317. Bannatyne edition.

³ Morton's Confession before his death; printed in Bannatyne's Memorials, p. 318. Archibald Douglas's letter to Queen Mary, April 1568; printed from the Harleian, by Robertson, Appendix, No. xlviij.

replied that Morton would have no difficulty in comprehending it; and it appears to me certain that it related to the same subject already talked of between them,—the king's murder, and the written warrant which Morton had required from the queen.

These secret interviews and conversations took place at Whittingham and Edinburgh in the latter part of the month of January, and on the 22d of the same month Mary set out on a visit to the king at Glasgow. Darnley was now partially recovered from his late sickness, but he had received some private intelligence of the plots against him. He was aware of the return of Morton, who regarded him as the cause of all his late sufferings; he knew, that amongst his mortal enemies, who had never forgiven him his desertion of them in the conspiracy against Riccio, were some of the highest nobility who now enjoyed the confidence of the queen. He had recently heard from one of his servants that Mary had spoken of him with much severity,⁴ and her visit, therefore, took him by surprise. Under this feeling the king sent Crawford, one of his gentlemen, to meet the queen, with a message, excusing himself for not waiting upon her in person.⁵ He was still infirm, he said, and did not presume to come to her until he knew her wishes, and was assured of the removal of her displeasure. To this Mary briefly replied, that there was no medicine against fear; and passing forward to Glasgow, came into Darnley's bedchamber, when, after greeting and some indifferent talk, the subjects which had estranged them from each other were introduced. Darnley professed a deep repentance for his errors, pleaded his youth, and the few friends he now had, and declared to her his unalterable affection. Mary reminded him of his com-

⁴ Thomas Crawford's Deposition. MS., State-paper Office. Endorsed by Cecil, but without date.

⁵ Anderson, vol. iv. pp. 168, 169, and MS., State-paper Office. Thomas Crawford's Deposition.

plaints and suspicions, spoke against his foolish plan of leaving the kingdom, and recalled to his mind the "purpose of Hiegate," a name given to a plot which Darnley affirmed he had discovered, and of which he was himself to be the victim. The queen demanded who was his informer. He replied the Laird of Minto, who had told him that a letter was presented to her in Craigmillar, made by her own device, and subscribed by certain others, who desired her to sign it, which she refused.¹ Darnley then added, that he would never think that she, who was his own proper flesh, would do him any hurt; and if any others should do it, they should buy it dear, unless they took him sleeping. He observed, however, that he suspected none; and only entreated her to bear him company, and not, as she was wont, to withdraw herself from him. Mary then told him, that as he was still little able to travel, she had brought a litter with her to carry him to Craigmillar, and he declared his readiness to accompany her, if she would consent that they should again live together at bed and board. She promised it should be as he had spoken, and gave him her hand; but added, that before this he must be thoroughly cleansed of his sickness, which she trusted he shortly would be, as she intended to give him the bath at Craigmillar. The queen also requested him to conceal the promises which had now passed between them, as the suddenness of their agreement might give umbrage to some of the lords; to which he replied, that he could see no reason why they should mislike it.

When Mary left him, Darnley called Crawford to him, and informing him fully of all that had passed at the interview, bade him communicate it to his father, the Earl of Lennox. He then asked him what he thought of the queen's taking him to Craigmillar? She treats your majesty, said Crawford, too like a prisoner. Why should you not be taken to one of your own houses in Edinburgh?

¹ Crawford's Deposition, *ut supra*.

"It struck me much the same way," answered Darnley; "and I have fears enough, but may God judge between us, I have her promise only to trust to; but I have put myself in her hands, and I shall go with her, though she should murder me."² It is from Crawford's evidence, taken on oath, which was afterwards produced, and still exists, endorsed by Cecil, that we learn these minute particulars; nor have I been able to discover any sufficient ground to doubt its truth.³

Soon after this interview, the queen carried her husband, by slow journeys, from Glasgow to Edinburgh, where she arrived on the last day of January.⁴ It had been at first intended, as we have seen, that Darnley should have taken up his residence at Craigmillar, but this purpose was changed; and as the palace of Holyrood was judged from its low situation to be unhealthy, and little fitted for an invalid, the king was brought to a suburb called the Kirk of Field, a more remote and airy site, occupied by the town residence of the Duke of Chastelherault, and other buildings and gardens. On their arrival here, the royal attendants were about to proceed to the duke's lodging as it was called, but on alighting, Mary informed them that the king's apartments were to be in an adjoining house, which stood beside the town wall, not far from a ruinous Dominican monastery, called the Black Friars.⁵ To this place she led Darnley, and making every allowance for the rudeness of the domestic accom-

² MS., State-paper Office. Thomas Crawford's Deposition. Crawford, a gentleman of the Earl of Lennox, was examined on oath before the commissioners at York, December 9, 1568, and then produced a paper which he had written immediately after the conversations between himself and the king and queen. Wherein he did write what had taken place as nearly word for word as his memory would serve him. Anderson, vol. iv. p. 169. This paper is the Deposition, endorsed by Cecil, from which I have taken the narrative in the text.

³ Cecil's Diary. Anderson, vol. ii. p. 271.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Jan. 26, 1566-7. Cecil's Diary. Anderson, vol. ii. p. 272.

⁵ Evidence of Thomas Nelson. Anderson, vol. iv. p. 165.

modations of these times, it appears to have been an insecure and confined mansion.¹ Its proprietor was Robert Balfour, a brother of that Sir James Balfour, whom we have already known as the deviser of the bond for the murder which was drawn up at Craigmillar, and then a dependent of Bothwell's. This earl, whose influence was now nearly supreme at court, had recently returned from Liddesdale; and when he understood that Mary and the king were on their road from Glasgow, he met them with his attendants, a short way from the capital, and accompanied the party to the Kirk of Field.²

At this moment the reconciliation between the queen and her husband seemed to be complete. She assiduously superintended every little detail which could add to his comfort. She treated him not only with attention but tenderness, passed much of the day in his society, and had a chamber prepared for herself immediately below his, where she slept.³ The king was partially reassured by these marks of affection. He knew that plots had been entertained against his life, and, as we have seen, suspected many of the nobles to be his enemies. Yet he trusted to the promises of the queen, and no doubt believed that, if she remained beside him, they would find it impossible to accomplish their cruel purpose. But when he indulged these hopes, the miserable prince was on the very brink of destruction.

Since their recent meeting at Whittingham, Bothwell, Morton, Lethington, and Sir James Balfour had fully determined on the murder. The Earls of Huntly, Argyle, and Caithness, Archibald Douglas, with the Archbishop of St Andrews, and many others of the leading lords and legal officers in the country had joined the conspiracy; and some who did not choose directly to share in the plot,

¹ See a minute description of it in the Deposition of Nelson, printed in Anderson, vol. iv. p. 165.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Cecil, Jan. 28, 1566-7, Carlisle.

³ Nelson's Evidence. Anderson, vol. iv. p. 166.

deemed it dangerous or impolitic to reveal it. Of this neutral sort the greatest was Moray, whom, from the evidence that yet remains, it is impossible to believe ignorant of the resolutions of his friends, but whose superior sagacity enabled him to avoid any direct connexion with the atrocious design which they now hurried on to its accomplishment.

On Sunday the 9th of February, Bastian, a foreigner belonging to the household of the queen, was to be married at Holyrood. The bride was one of her favourite women, and Mary, to honour their union, had promised them a masque. The greatest part of that day she passed with the king. They appeared to be on the most affectionate terms, and she declared her intention of remaining all night at the Kirk of Field. It was at this moment, when Darnley and the queen were engaged in conversation, that Hay of Tallo, Hepburn of Bolton, and other ruffians whom Bothwell had hired for the purpose, secretly entered the chamber which was under the king's, and deposited on the floor a large quantity of gunpowder in bags. They then laid a train, which was connected with a "lunt," or slow match, and placed everything in readiness for its being lighted. Some of them now hurried away, but two of the conspirators remained on the watch; and in the meantime Mary, who still sat with her husband in the upper chamber, recollecting her promise of giving the masque at Bastian's wedding, and taking farewell of Darnley, embraced him and left the house with her suite.⁴

Soon after, the king retired to his bed-chamber. Since his illness there appeared to be a great change in him. He had become more thoughtful, and thought had brought with it repentance of his former courses. He lamented there were few near him whom he could trust, and at times he would say, that he knew he should be slain, complaining that he was hardly dealt with; but from these sorrows he had sought refuge in religion, and it was

⁴ Nelson's Evidence. Anderson, vol. iv. p. 167.

remarked that on this night, his last in this world, he had repeated the 55th Psalm, which he would often read and sing.¹ After his devotion he went to bed and fell asleep, Taylor, his page, being beside him in the same apartment. This was the moment seized by the murderers, who still lurked in the lower room, to complete their dreadful purpose; but their miserable victim was awakened by the noise of their false keys in the lock of his apartment, and, rushing down in his shirt and pelisse, endeavoured to make his escape, but he was intercepted and strangled after a desperate resistance, his cries for mercy being heard by some women in the nearest house; the page was also strangled; and their bodies were carried into a small orchard, without the garden wall, where they were found, the king in his shirt only, and the pelisse by his side.² Amid the conflicting stories of the ruffians who were executed, it is difficult to arrive at the whole truth. But no doubt rests on the part acted by Bothwell, the arch-conspirator. He had quitted the king's apartments with the queen, and joined the festivities in the palace, from which about midnight he stole away, changed his rich dress, and rejoined the murderers who waited for him at the Kirk of Field. His arrival was the signal to complete their purpose: the match was lighted, but burnt too slow for their breathless impatience; and they were stealing forward to examine it, when it took effect. A loud noise, like the bursting of a thunder-cloud, awoke the sleeping city; the king's house was torn in pieces and cast into the air; and the assassins, hurrying from the spot, under cover of the darkness, regained the palace. Here Bothwell had scarcely undressed and gone to bed, when the cry arose in the city, that the Kirk of Field had been blown up, and the king murdered. The

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, about 18th April 1567.

² See the Account of M. de Moret. Proofs and Illustrations, No. XVIII. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Feb. 12, 1566-7. Ibid., same to same, about 18th April 1567.

news flew quickly to Holyrood, and a servant rushing into his chamber imparted the dreadful tidings. He started up in well-feigned astonishment, and shouted "Treason!" He was joined next moment by Huntly, a brother conspirator; and immediately these two noblemen, with others belonging to the court, entered the queen's apartments, when Mary was made acquainted with the dreadful fate of her husband.³ She was horror-struck, shut herself up in her bed-chamber, and seemed overwhelmed with sorrow.⁴

The murder had been committed on Monday, about two in the morning, and when day broke, multitudes crowded to examine the Kirk of Field. Any lengthened scrutiny, however, was not permitted; for Bothwell soon repaired to the spot with a guard, and the king's body was carried to a neighbouring house, where it lay till it was produced before the privy-council. In the brief interval, however, it had been noted that the bodies, both of Darnley and of his page, were unscathed by fire or powder, and that no blood wound appeared on either.⁵

This gave rise to innumerable contradictory reports and conjectures; but all agreed that instant inquiry promised the only hope of discovery; and men watched with intense interest the conduct of the queen and her ministers. Two days, however, elapsed before any step was taken;⁶ but on the Wednesday after the murder, a proclamation offered two thousand pounds reward to any who would come forward with information; and scarce was this made public, when a paper was fixed during the night on the door of the Tolbooth, or common prison. It denounced the Earl of

³ Declaration of William Pourie. Anderson, vol. ii. p. 170.

⁴ Examinations and Depositions of William Pourie, George Dalgleish, John Hay, younger of Tallo, and John Hepburn of Bolton, concerning the murder of the king. Anderson, vol. ii. pp. 165, 192, inclusive.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., February 11, 1566-7. Enclosure by Drury to Cecil.

⁶ MS. Letter. State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, February 12, 1566-7.

Bothwell, Mr James Balfour, and David Chambers, as guilty of the king's slaughter. Voices, too, were heard in the streets at dead of night, arraigning the same persons; and as the fate of the king had excited the deepest indignation in the people, Mary's friends looked with the utmost anxiety to the conduct she should pursue. To their mortification, it was anything but satisfactory. Instead of acting with that spirit, promptitude, and vigour which she had so recently exhibited under the most trying emergencies, she betrayed a deplorable apathy and remissness. After keeping her chamber for some days, she removed to the seat of Lord Seaton, at a short distance from the capital, accompanied by Bothwell, Argyll, Huntly, the Archbishop of St Andrews, and Secretary Lethington.¹ On the preceding day Darnley had been buried in the chapel of Holyrood, but with great privacy. None of the nobility attended the ceremony; and it was remarked that, of the officers of state, the Justice-clerk Bellenden was alone present.

Meantime, whilst the queen was at Seaton, placards accusing Bothwell were openly exposed in the capital. The first of these appeared on the 17th, another repeated the denunciation on the 19th, and on the succeeding day, the Earl of Lennox, father to the murdered king, commenced a correspondence with the queen, in which he implored her to apprehend the suspected persons, and to lose no time in investigating the circumstances of his son's slaughter.² She replied that the placards contradicted each other, and that she was at a loss on which to proceed. He returned for answer, that the names of the persons suspected were notorious to the world, and marvelled they should have been kept from her majesty's ears; but to prevent all mistakes, he

should repeat them: the Earl Bothwell, Mr James Balfour, Mr David Chambers, and black Mr John Speys were denounced, he said, in the first placard; in the second, Signor Francis, Bastian, John de Bordeaux, and Joseph, David's brother; and he finally besought the queen, in the most earnest and touching terms, to take order for their immediate apprehension. But he besought her in vain.³ At the moment he was writing, Bothwell continued in high favour, and enjoyed the most familiar intercourse with Mary. Although the reports of his guilt as the principal assassin became daily stronger; nay, as if to convince Lennox that all remonstrances would be inefficacious, Sir James Balfour, the very man who was named as his fellow-murderer, was suffered to be at large.

It was at this time that Lutyni the Italian, Joseph Riccio's companion, was sent back by Drury to the Queen of Scots. Riccio himself, as we have just seen, had been accused as one of the murderers of the king; but that Lutyni's secret, of which Riccio so much dreaded the discovery, related to the plot, can only be conjectured. On his arrival the queen did not see him, (it was scarce a week after Darnley's death,) but directed that he should be examined by Bothwell. This baron was apparently satisfied with the reasons which he gave for his flight, and after a courteous interview, permitted him to return to Berwick. The queen, at the same time, sent him a present of thirty crowns; and he soon after left the country, expressing the utmost satisfaction at his escape.⁴

Had the queen entertained any serious idea of discovering the perpe-

³ Anderson, vol. i. pp. 40, 44, 47, 48. Also Enclosure in MS. Letter, B.C., State-paper Office, Forster to Cecil, 28th February 1566-7.

⁴ Whether guilty or no, Lutyni had been so well tutored by his friend, that no suspicion was raised. It is evident, however, that fears were felt for him, as Drury had procured a promise from Mary and Lethington, that he should be dismissed in safety; and sent a gentleman of the garrison with him, to see that it was fulfilled. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., February 19, 1566-7. Same to same, B.C., February 28, 1566-7.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, Berwick, February 17, 1566, i.e., 1566-7.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, February 19, 1566-7, Berwick. Also Ibid., same to same, Berwick, February 28, 1566-7. Cabala, p. 126. Norris to Cecil. Anderson's Collections, vol. i p. 40.

trators of the murder, the steps to be pursued were neither dubious nor intricate. If she was afraid to seize the higher delinquents, it was, at least, no difficult matter to have apprehended and examined the persons who had provided the lodging in which the king was slain. The owner of the house, Robert Balfour, was well known; her own servants who had been intrusted with the keys, and the king's domestics who had absented themselves before the explosion, or were preserved from its effects, were still on the spot, and might have been arrested and brought before the privy-council.¹ But nothing of this kind took place; and in this interval of delay and apparent indecision, many persons from whom information might have been elicited, and some who were actually accused, took the opportunity of leaving the country. On the 19th of February, only nine days after the explosion, Sir W. Drury addressed an interesting letter to Cecil from Berwick, in which he mentioned that Dolu, the queen's treasurer, had arrived in that town with eight others, amongst whom was Bastian, one of those denounced in the placards. Francis the Italian steward, the same person whose name had been also publicly posted up as engaged in the murder, was expected, he added, to pass that way within a few days, and other Frenchmen had left Scotland by sea.²

In the midst of these events the Earl of Bothwell continued to have the chief direction of affairs, and to share with Lethington, Argyle, and Huntly the confidence of the queen. The Earls of Moray and Morton, who were absent from the capital at the time of the murder, shewed no disposition to return; and Lennox, when requested by Mary to repair to court, dismissed her messenger without an answer.³

Meanwhile rumour was busy, and

¹ Laing, p. 52.

² State-paper Office, B.C., Berwick, Drury to Cecil, February 19, 1566-7. Ibid., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, February 19, 1566-7.

³ Ibid., same to same, Feb. 19, 1566-7.

some particulars were talked of amongst the people, which, if any real solicitude on the subject had existed, might have still given a clue to trace the assassins. A smith was spoken of in a bill fastened on the Tron,⁴ who had furnished the false keys to the king's apartment, and who, on due security, promised to come forward and point out his employers.⁵ A person was said to be discovered in Edinburgh, from whom Sir James Balfour had purchased a large quantity of powder; and other placards and drawings appeared, in which the queen herself and Bothwell were plainly pointed at. But the only effect produced by such intimations, was to rouse this daring man to a passionate declaration of vengeance. Accompanied by fifty guards, he rode to the capital from Seton,⁶ and with furious oaths and gestures declared publicly, that if he knew who were the authors of the bills or drawings, he would "wash his hands in their blood."⁷ It was remarked, that as he passed through the streets, his followers kept a jealous watch, and crowded round him as if they apprehended an attack, whilst he himself spoke to no one, of whom he was not assured, without his hand on the hilt of his dagger. His deportment and fierce looks were much noted by the people, who began at the same time to express themselves openly and bitterly against the queen.⁸ It was observed that Captain Cullen and his company were the guards nearest her person, and he was well-known to be a sworn follower of Bothwell's; it was remarked, that whilst all inquiry into the murder appeared to be forgotten, an active investigation took place as to the authors of the placards;⁹ and minister circumstances were noted, which seemed to argue a light and indifferent

⁴ A post in the public market, where goods were weighed.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, February 28, 1566-7.

⁶ Seton castle, Haddingtonshire.

⁷ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, February 28, 1566-7.

⁸ MS. Letter, Drury to Cecil, February 28, 1566-7.

⁹ Keith, p. 374.

behaviour, at a time when her manner should have been especially circumspect and guarded. It did not escape attention, that scarce two weeks after her husband's death, whilst in the country and in the city all were still shocked at the late occurrences, and felt them as a stain on their national character, the court at Seton was occupied in gay amusements. Mary and Bothwell would shoot at the butts against Huntly and Seton; and, on one occasion, after winning the match, they forced these lords to pay the forfeit in the shape of a dinner at Tranent.¹ On the evening of the day on which the earl had exhibited so much fury in the streets of the capital, two more placards were hung up: on the one were written the initials, M. R., with a hand holding a sword; on the other, Bothwell's initials, with a mallet painted above, an obscure allusion to the only wound found upon the unhappy prince, which appeared to have been given by a blunt instrument.

These symptoms of suspicion and dissatisfaction were not confined to the people. Movements began to be talked of amongst the nobles. It was reported that Moray and some friends had held a meeting at Dunkeld, where they were joined by Caithness, Athole, and Morton;² and as this nobleman had absented himself from court, and kept aloof amongst his dependants, the queen became at length convinced that something must be done to prevent a coalition against her, and to satisfy the people that she was determined to institute a public inquiry into the murder.

To this, indeed, she had been urged in the most solemn and earnest terms by Bishop Beaton, her ambassador at Paris. The day after Darnley's death she had written to this prelate, giving a brief description of the late dreadful events, and lamenting that his affectionate warning, to beware of some sudden danger, had arrived too late. In his answer he had implored

her to lose no time in prosecuting its authors, and vindicating herself in the eyes of the world. He had even gone so far as to repeat the common opinion then current in France, that she was herself the principal cause of the king's death, and that nothing had been done without her consent. His expressions upon this point were very remarkable: "Of this deed, if I should write all that is spoken here, and also in England, of the miserable estate of [the] realm by the dishonour of the nobility, mistrust and treason of your whole subjects, yea, that yourself is greatly and wrongfully calumniated to be the motive principal of the whole, and all done by your command, I can conclude nothing besides that which your majesty writes to me yourself, that since it hath pleased God to preserve you to take a rigorous vengeance thereof, that rather than it be not actually taken, it appears to me better, in this world, that you had lost life and all . . . Here it is needful that you shew forth now, rather than ever before, the great virtue, magnanimity, and constancy, which God has granted you; by whose grace I hope you shall overcome this most heavy envy and displeasure of the committing thereof, and preserve that reputation in all godliness which you have acquired long since; which can appear no ways more clearly than that you do such justice as the whole world may declare your innocence, and give testimony for ever of their treason that have committed, without fear of God or man, so cruel and ungodly a murder."³

This honest letter was written on the 8th of March, about a month after the king's murder; and on the same day Mary received a message of condolence and advice from Elizabeth. It was brought by Sir Henry Killigrew, who on his arrival, after dining with Bothwell, Morton, Lethington, and Argyle, (all of them, as was afterwards proved, participated in this cruel deed,) was admitted to the

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, February 28, 1566-7.

² Ibid.

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³ Keith, Preface, p. ix. Extract from the original in the Scottish College, Paris.

queen. To see her face was impossible, for the chamber was dark, but, by her voice and manner, she seemed in profound grief; and not only assured the envoy of her desire to satisfy the Queen of England's wishes regarding the treaty of Leith and the matters of the Borders, but promised him that the Earl of Bothwell should be brought to a public trial.¹

During his stay in the capital, which lasted but a few days, Killigrew found the people clamorous for inquiry into the assassination, which they regarded as a shame to the whole nation; whilst the preachers solemnly exhorted all men to prayer and repentance, and in their pulpits appealed to God, that He would be pleased "to reveal and revenge."² Scarce, however, had this envoy departed, when the queen seemed to have forgotten her good resolutions; and, infatuated in her predilection for Bothwell, admitted him to greater power and favour than ever. The Earl of Mar was induced to give up the castle of Edinburgh, and it was given to Bothwell. Morton, after a secret and midnight interview with his royal mistress, received the castle of Tantallon and other lands which he had forfeited by his rebellion; and it was remarked, that in return for this, his whole power and interest were assured to Bothwell. The castle of Blackness, the Inch, and the superiority of Leith were conferred on the same favourite; and so completely did he rule everything at court, that Moray, although he judged it prudent to keep on friendly terms, became disgusted with the inferior part he now acted, and requested permission to leave the kingdom.³

In the midst of these transactions,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Cecil, 8th March 1566-7. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., 30th March 1567, Drury to Cecil, Berwick.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Cecil, ut supra.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., 17th March 1566-7. Same to same, 14th March 1566-7, B.C. Same to same, B.C., 21st March 1567. Same to same, 29th and 30th March 1567, B.C. See also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 4th April 1567.

it was observed that the queen was wretched. She attended a solemn dirge for the soul of her husband; and they who were near her on this occasion, remarked a melancholy change from her former health and beauty. Nor were these feelings likely to be soothed by the letters which she now received from France, in which the queen-mother and the cardinal her uncle addressed her with bitter reproaches, and declared that if she failed to avenge the death of the king their cousin, and to clear herself from the imputations brought against her, they would not only consider her as utterly disgraced, but become her enemies.⁴

Urged by these repeated appeals, she at last resolved that Bothwell should be brought to a public trial; but the circumstances which attended this tardy exhibition of justice were little calculated to justify her in the opinion of her people. He had now become so powerful by the favour of the crown, and the many offices conferred upon him, that it was evident, as long as he remained at large and ruled everything at court, no person dared be so hardy as accuse him. His trial accordingly was little else than a mock ceremonial, directed by himself, and completely overruled by his creatures. The Earl of Lennox, who at an earlier period had in vain implored the queen to investigate the murder, and to collect, whilst it was attainable, such evidence as might bring the guilt home to its authors, now as earnestly and justly pleaded the necessity of delay. He had been summoned to appear and make good his accusation against Bothwell; but he declared that it was in vain to expect him to come singly, opposed to a powerful adversary, who enjoyed the royal favour, and commanded the town and the castle. He conjured the queen to grant him some time, that he might assemble his friends; he observed, that when the suspected persons were still at liberty, powerful at court, and about her majesty's per-

⁴ Drury's letter to Cecil, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 29th March 1567, B.C.

son, no fair trial could take place; and, when all was in vain, he applied to Elizabeth, who wrote to Mary in the strongest terms, and besought her, as she hoped to save herself from the worst suspicions, to listen to so just a request. It was forcibly urged by the English queen, that Lennox was well assured of a combination to acquit Bothwell, and to accomplish by force what could never be attained by law; and she advised her, in the management of a cause which touched her so nearly, to use that sincerity and prudence which might convince the whole world that she was guiltless.¹

It is not certain that the Scottish queen received this letter in time to stay the proceedings, for it was written only four days previous to the trial; and the Provost-marshal of Berwick, to whom its delivery was intrusted, arrived at the capital early on the morning of the 12th of April, the very day on which the trial took place. The state in which he found the city soon convinced him that his message would be fruitless. When he entered the palace, the friends of the Earl of Bothwell were assembled. They and their followers mustered four thousand men, besides a guard of two hundred hagbutters. This formidable force kept possession of the streets, and filled the outer court of the palace; and as the castle was at his devotion, it was evident that Bothwell completely commanded the town.

It was scarcely to be expected that a messenger whose errand was suspected to be a request for delay should be welcome; and although he announced himself to be bearer of a letter from Elizabeth, he was rudely treated, reproached as an English villain, who had come to stay the "assize,"² and assured that the queen was too busy with the matters of the day to attend to other business. At that moment Bothwell himself, with the Secretary Lethington, came out

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 4th April 1567.

² The trial by a jury.—MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., 15th April 1567, Berwick, Drury to Cecil. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XIX.

of the palace, and the provost-marshal delivered the Queen of England's letters to the secretary, who, accompanied by Bothwell, carried them to Mary. No answer, however, was brought back; and after a short interval, the earl and the secretary again came out, and mounted their horses, when he eagerly pressed forward for his answer. Lethington then assured him that his royal mistress was asleep, and could not receive the letter; but the excuse was hardly uttered before it was proved to be false, for at this moment a servant of De Croc's, the French ambassador, who stood beside the English envoy, looking up, saw, and pointed out the queen and Mary Fleming, wife of the secretary, standing at a window of the palace; nor did it escape their notice that, as Bothwell rode past, Mary gave him a friendly greeting for a farewell. The cavalcade then left the court, and proceeded to the Tolbooth, where the trial was to take place, Bothwell's hagbutters surrounding the door, and permitting none to enter who were suspected of being unfavourable to the accused.³

From the previous preparations, the result of such a trial might have been anticipated with certainty. The whole proceedings had already been arranged in a council, held some little time before, in which Bothwell had taken his seat, and given directions regarding his own arraignment.⁴ The jury consisted principally, if not wholly, of the favourers of the earl; the law officers of the crown were either in his interest, or overawed into silence; no witnesses were summoned; the indictment was framed with a flaw too manifest to be accidental; and his accuser, the Earl of Lennox, who was on his road to the city, surrounded by a large force of his friends, had received an order not to enter the town with more than six in his company.⁵ All this shewed too

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, April 15, 1567, Berwick, B.C. Also a fragment, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, undated, Drury to Cecil, April 1567.

⁴ Anderson's Collections, vol. i. p. 50.

⁵ Anderson, vol. ii. p. 98. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Cecil, 15th

manifestly what was intended; and Lennox, as might have been anticipated, declined to come forward in person. When summoned to make good his accusation, a gentleman named Cunningham appeared, and stated that he had been sent by the earl his master to reiterate the charge of murder, but to request delay, as his friends, who had intended to have accompanied him, both for his honour and security, had changed their resolution.¹ On this being refused to Lennox's envoy, he publicly protested against the validity of any sentence of acquittal, and withdrew. The jury were then chosen: the earl pleaded not guilty; and, in the absence of all evidence, a unanimous verdict of acquittal was pronounced. Bothwell then by a public cartel challenged any gentleman who should still brand him with the murder. On hearing of this defiance, Sir William Drury requested Cecil to intercede with Elizabeth that he might be permitted to accept it, professing himself absolutely convinced of the earl's guilt; and next day a paper was set up, declaring, that if a day were fixed, a gentleman should appear—but as no name was given the matter dropped.²

It was evident to all the world that this famous trial was collusive; nor could it well be otherwise. Argyle, Morton, Huntly, and Lethington were all more or less participant in the king's murder, they were the sworn and leagued friends of Bothwell, and they conducted the whole proceedings. It has been argued by Mary's advocates, that she was a passive instrument in the hands of this faction, and could not, even if willing, have insisted on a fair trial. But, however anxious to lean to every presumption in favour of innocence, I have discovered no proofs of this servitude; and such imbecility appears to me

April 1567. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, 15th April 1567.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Forster to Cecil, April 15, 1567, Alnwick. Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. p. 107.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, a fragment, Drury to Cecil, April 1567. Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. p. 158.

inconsistent with the vigour, decision, and courage, which were striking features in her character.

The acquittal, although countenanced by the nobles, was loudly reprobed by the common people; and as rumours began to rise of a divorce between Bothwell and his countess, a sister of Huntly, their indignation and disgust were strongly expressed. Even in the public streets, and in the queen's presence, these feelings betrayed themselves; and the market women, as Mary passed, would cry out, "God preserve your grace, if you are saikless³ of the king's death." It was noted, too, that this daring man had insulted the general feeling by riding to his trial on Darnley's favourite horse; it was reported to Drury that the queen had sent him a token and message during the proceedings;⁴ and everything must have united to shew Mary that her late conduct was viewed with the utmost sorrow and indignation. Yet, instead of opening her eyes to the perils of her situation, she seems to have resigned herself to the influence of one strong and engrossing passion; and her history at this moment hurried forward with something so like an irresistible fatality, as to make it currently reported amongst the people that Bothwell was dealing in love philtres, and had employed the sorceries of his old paramour, the Lady Buccleuch.

Immediately after the trial parliament assembled; and the queen, irritated, perhaps, at the open censures of the city, declined the ancient custom of being guarded by the magistrates and trained bands, preferring a company of hagbutters. The acquittal of Bothwell was then confirmed by the three estates, the conduct of the jury was approved of, the estates of Huntly and his friends restored, a rigid inquiry instituted against the authors of all bills in which Bothwell had been accused; and, as if to com-

³ Saikless—innocent.

⁴ Drury to Cecil, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., 10th April 1567, and April 19, 1567. Also April 1567. No date of the day is given, but the month is certain.

plete his triumph, Mary now selected him to bear the crown and sceptre before her when she rode to parliament.¹ It is worthy of remark also, that in this same parliament the Roman Catholic partialities of the queen seemed to be modified; and it is by no means improbable that, owing to the influence of Bothwell, who was a Protestant, the reformed party were treated with greater favour than before. Mary willingly agreed to abolish all laws affecting the lives of her subjects, on the score of their religion; she passed an act securing a provision to the poorer ministers; and it is likely more would have been granted if their Assembly had refrained from recommending a rigid inquiry into the king's murder, which she resented and declined.²

So completely did she espouse the cause of her profligate favourite, that although all already dreaded his power, he now received from her the lordship and castle of Dunbar, with an enlargement of his office of high admiral; and it was evident that, by the favour of the crown, and his "bands" with the greater nobles, he had shot up to a strength which none would dare to resist.³ Moray, from his power and popularity, was the only man who could have opposed him, but he now shunned the contest. We have already seen that he had abstained from implicating himself in the bond for the king's murder: the very day that preceded it he had left the capital. Since that time he seldom attended the meetings of the council; and shortly previous to the trial, with the queen's permission, he retired to France.⁴ The friends, indeed, with whom he had long and intimately acted, Morton, Argyle, Huntly, Lethington, and their associates, were all of them conspirators in the king's

¹ Keith, p. 378.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir W. Kirkaldy to Bedford, April 20, 1567. *Ibid.*, MS. Letter, same to same, 8th May 1567.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., April 19, 1567; also same to same, April 27, 1567.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, April 9 and 10, 1567.

death;⁵ and they now appeared firm adherents of Bothwell; but, in the meantime, it is certain that for some time all open intercourse between them and Moray was suspended.

After his departure the events of every day exhibited some new proofs of the infatuated predilection of the queen. Happy had it been for this unfortunate princess, had she listened for a moment to the calm and earnest advice of her ambassador at the court of France, when he implored her to punish her husband's murderers, and warned her in such solemn terms, that the eyes of Europe were fixed upon her conduct; but his letter appears to have made little impression: the collusive trial of Bothwell gave a shock to her best friends, and the extraordinary events which now rapidly succeeded confirmed the worst suspicions of her enemies.

On the evening of the day on which the parliament rose, (19th of April,) Bothwell invited the principal nobility to supper, in a tavern kept by a person named Ansley. They sat drinking till a late hour; and during the entertainment a band of two hundred hagbutters surrounded the house and overawed its inmates.⁶ The earl then rose and proposed his marriage with the queen, affirming that he had gained her consent, and even (it is said) producing her written warrant empowering him to propose the matter to her nobility. Of the guests some were his sworn friends, others were terrified and irresolute; and in the confusion one nobleman, the Earl of Eglinton, contrived to make his escape; but the rest, both Papist and Protestant, were overawed into compliance, and affixed their signatures to a bond, in which they declared their conviction of Bothwell's innocence, and recommended "this noble and mighty lord" as a suitable husband for the queen, whose continuance in solitary widowhood they declared was injurious to the interests of the com-

⁵ This was afterwards clearly established.

⁶ Anderson, vol. iv. p. 60, Elizabeth's Commissioners to the Queen, 11th October 1568, from Caligula, C. i. fol. 198

monwealth. The most influential persons who signed this disgraceful instrument were the Earls of Morton, Argyle, Huntly, Cassillis, Sutherland, Glencairn, Rothes, and Caithness; and of the lords, Herries, Hume, Boyd, Seton, and Sinclair.¹

The perfection to which the system of paid informers was now carried in Scotland, and the rapid communication of secret intelligence to England and the Continent, have been already frequently remarked in the course of this history; but at no time did Elizabeth possess more certain information than at the present. She knew and watched with intense interest every step taken by Mary; her far-reaching and sagacious eye had, it is probable, already detected the ruin of her beautiful and envied rival, in that career of passion upon which it was now too apparent to all that she had entered; and her ministers, Cecil and Bedford, who managed the affairs of Scotland, availed themselves with indefatigable assiduity of every possible source of information. Nor did they want assistants in that country, where a party was now secretly organising for the protection of the prince and the government, against the audacious designs of Bothwell.

Of this confederacy the most powerful at this moment were Argyle, Athole, Morton, and Sir William Kirkaldy, or, as he was commonly called, the Laird of Grange, a person of great influence, reputed the best military leader in Scotland, intimately acquainted with the politics of England and the Continent, and, as we have already seen, strongly attached to the Protestant cause. The audacity and success of Bothwell naturally roused such a man, and all who professed the same principles; they justly believed that he who had murdered the father would have little scruple in removing the son; they were aware of the in-

¹ Anderson, vol. i. p. 107, from a copy in the Cottonian Library, Caligula, C. i. fol. 1. Keith, p. 381. There is a contemporary copy of the Bond in the State-paper Office, it is dated April 19, 1567, and bears this endorsement in Randolph's hand, "Upon this was grounded the accusation of the Earl Morton."

famous bond for the queen's marriage, some of them indeed had signed it; and they asserted that the unhappy princess, who should have watched over the preservation of her child, was no longer mistress of her own actions. To declare themselves prematurely would have been ruin, considering the power of their opponent; they therefore secretly collected their strength, and gave warning to their friends, but determined to take no open step till they had consulted the wishes of Elizabeth.

For this purpose Grange addressed a letter to the Earl of Bedford on the day after Ansley's supper. He informed him of the miserable servitude of the nobles, and the infatuation of the queen, but assured him in strong terms, that even now, if Elizabeth would assist him and his friends, the murder of their sovereign should not long be unavenged. He enlarged on the imminent danger of the prince, and predicted Mary's speedy marriage to Bothwell, of whom he added, she had become so shamelessly enamoured that she had been heard to say, "she cared not to lose France, England, and her own country, for him, and shall go with him to the world's end in a white petticoat, before she leave him." He concluded his letter in these severe words, "Whatever is dishonest reigns presently in our court: God deliver them from their evil."²

This letter from Grange was soon after followed by a still more remarkable anonymous communication. Whilst ~~Mary~~ and Bothwell believed their secret plans were safe, their confidential agents had betrayed them to this informer, by whom instant intelligence was sent to England, that the Countess of Bothwell, Huntly's sister, was about to divorce the earl; and that the queen had projected with her favourite, that seizure of her person, in which she was to be carried with a show of violence to Dunbar. The letter which was probably addressed to Cecil is too remarkable to be omitted.

"This is to advertise you that the

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Grange to Bedford, 20th April 1567.

Earl Bothwell's wife is going to part with her husband; and a great part of our lords have subscribed the marriage between the queen and him. The queen rode to Stirling this last Monday and returns this Thursday. I doubt not but you have heard how the Earl of Bothwell has gathered many of his friends, and, as some say, to ride in Liddesdale, but I believe it is not, for he is minded to meet the queen this day called Thursday, and to take her by the way and bring her to Dunbar. Judge you gif¹ it be with her will or no? but you will hear at more length on Friday or Saturday, if you will find it good that I continue in writing as occasion serves. I wald ye reif this² after the reading; this bearer knows nothing of this matter. There is no other thing presently to write of; but after all you will please receive my hearty commendations by him that is yours, that took you by the hand. At midnight."³

The intelligence given in this letter proved true. Mary, on Monday the 21st April, repaired to Stirling to visit the prince her son, and was much offended with the Earl of Mar, his governor, who, from some suspicion which he entertained, refused to allow the queen to enter the royal apartments with more than two of her ladies.⁴ In the mean season Bothwell had assembled his friends to the number of eight hundred spears; and meeting her at Almond Bridge, six miles from Edinburgh, he suddenly surrounded her attendants, and with a show of violence conducted her to Dunbar, his own castle, which he had prepared for her reception.⁵ In the royal cavalcade thus surprised, were Lethington, Huntly,

Sir James Melvil, and some others. The three last were carried prisoners to Dunbar with the queen, the rest were suffered to pursue their journey; but when Melvil remonstrated against such usage, he was informed by Captain Blacater, a confidential servant of Bothwell's, that all had been done with the queen's own consent.⁶ And it cannot be denied that everything which now happened seemed strongly to confirm this assertion.

On the 26th of April, only two days after the event, Grange addressed this indignant letter to Bedford:—

"This queen will never cease unto such time as she have wrecked all the honest men of this realm. She was minded to cause Bothwell ravish her,⁷ to the end that she may the sooner end the marriage whilk she promised before she caused Bothwell murder her husband. There is many that would revenge the murder, but they fear your mistress. I am so suited to for to enterprise the revenge, that I must either take it upon hand, or else I man⁸ leave the country, the whilk⁹ I am determined to do, if I can obtain licence; but Bothwell is minded to cut me off, if he may, ere I obtain it, and is returned out of Stirling to Edinburgh. She minds hereafter to take the prince out of the Earl of Mar's hands, and put him in his hands that murdered his father, as I writ in my last. I pray your lordship let me know what your mistress will do, for if we will seek France, we may find favour at their hands, but I would rather persuade to lean to England. This meikle¹⁰ in haste, from my house, the 26th of April."¹¹

Mary was now swept forward, by the current of a blind and infatuated passion. A divorce between Bothwell and his countess, Lady Jane Gordon,

¹ If.

² "I would have you tear this."

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office; this letter, though undated, contains internal proof that it was written on Thursday the 24th April, at midnight, the day Bothwell carried off the queen to Dunbar. Cecil's Journal in Anderson, vol. ii. p. 275. Keith, p. 383.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., 27th April 1567.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 27th April 1567. Ibid., same to same, B.C., 25th April 1567. Ibid., B.C., same to same, 30th April 1567.

⁶ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 177. Bannatyne edition.

⁷ Used here in the sense of forcibly to seize—*rapiō*.

⁸ Must.

¹⁰ Much.

⁹ Which.
¹¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Copy of the time, backed in the handwriting of Cecil's clerk, "Copy of the Laird of Grange's letter to the Earl of Bedford"

was procured with indecent haste ; and it was suspected that the recent restoration of his consistorial rights to the Archbishop of St Andrews had been made with this object. The process was hurried through the court of that prelate, and the commissariat or reformed court, in two days.¹ After a brief residence at Dunbar, under the roof of the man accused of the murder of her husband, and the forcible seizure of her person, the queen and Bothwell rode to the capital.² As she entered the town, his followers cast away their spears, to save themselves, as was conjectured, from any charge of treason ; and their master, with apparent courtesy, dismounting, took the queen's bridle, and led her into the castle under a salvo of artillery.³ It was a sight which her friends beheld with the deepest sorrow, and her enemies with triumph and derision.

A few days after this, Sir Robert Melvil, who had joined the coalition for the revenge of the king's murder and the delivery of the queen, wrote secretly to Cecil. His object was to warn the English minister that France was ready to join the lords against Bothwell, and to excuse, as far as he possibly could, the unaccountable conduct of his mistress. They were resolved, he said, never to consider their sovereign at liberty so long as she remained in the company of that traitor, who had committed so detestable a murder, whatever he might persuade or compel her to say to the contrary. "I understand," said he, "that the nobility are of mind to suit assistance of the queen your mistress, in consideration that the king, who is with God, as well as the queen our sovereign, and the prince her son, are so near of blood to her highness. I believe easy help shall obtain the queen's liberty, and in like manner have the murderers of the king punished. Thus far I will make your honour privy of, that France has offered to enter in band with the nobility of the realm,

and to enlist the company of men-at-arms, and to give divers pensions to noblemen and gentlemen of their realm, which some did like well ; but the honest sort has concluded, and brought the rest to the same effect, that they will do nothing which may offend your sovereign, without the fault be in her majesty ; and it appears both Papist and Protestant join together with an earnest affection for the weal of their country." . . . He then added that Bothwell, as all thought, would soon end the marriage, and pass to Stirling to seize the prince. He entreated Cecil to consider the queen his sovereign's conduct as rather the effect of the evil counsel of those about her, than proceeding from herself ; and lastly begged him to destroy his letter.⁴

Next day Grange wrote on the same subject to Bedford, and in still more striking terms. "All such things," said he, "as were done before the parliament, I did write unto your lordship at large. . . . At that time the most part of the nobility, for fear of their lives, did grant to sundry things both against their honours and consciences, who since have convened themselves at Stirling, where they have made a 'band' to defend [each] other in all things that shall concern the glory of God and commonweal of their country. The heads that presently they agreed upon is, first, to seek the liberty of the queen, who is ravished and detained by the Earl of Bothwell, who was the ravisher, and hath the strengths, munitions, and men of war at his commandment. The next head is the preservation and keeping of the prince. The third is to pursue them that murdered the king. For the pursuit of these three heads they have promised to bestow their lives, lands, and goods. And to that effect their lordships have desired me to write unto your lordship, to the end they might have your sovereign's aid and support for suppressing of the cruel murderer Bothwell, who, at the queen's last being in

¹ Keith, p. 383. Also Original State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 2d May 1567.

² On the 3d of May.

³ Anderson, vol. ii. p. 276.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Melvil to Cecil, 7th May 1567. Dated Kerny in File.

Stirling, suborned certain to have poisoned the prince; for that barbarous tyrant is not contented to have murdered the father, but he would also cut off the son, for fear that he hath to be punished hereafter. The names of the lords that convened in Stirling were the Earls of Argyle, Morton, Athole, and Mar. Those forenamed, as said is, have desired me to write unto your lordship to the end that I might know by you, if your sovereign would give them support concerning these three heads above written. . . . Wherefore I beseech your lordship, who I am assured loveth the quietness of these two realms, to let me have a direct answer, and that with haste; for presently the foresaid lords are suited unto by Monsieur de Croc, who offereth unto them in his master, the King of France's name, if they will follow his advice and counsel, that they shall have aid and support to suppress the Earl Bothwell and his faction. . . . Also he hath admonished her [Mary] to desist from the Earl Bothwell, and not to marry him; for if she do, he hath assured her that she shall neither have friendship nor favour out of France, if she shall have to do: ¹ but his saying is, she will give no ear. . . .

"There is to be joined with the four forenamed lords, the Earls of Glencairn, Cassillis, Eglinton, Montrose, Caithness; the Lords Boyd, Ochiltree, Ruthven, Drummond, Gray, Glammis, Innermeith, Lindsay, Hume, and赫ries, with all the whole West Merse and Teviotdale, the most part of Fife, Angus, and Mearns. And for this effect the Earl of Argyle is ridden in the west, the Earl of Athole to the north, and the Earl of Morton to Fife, Angus, and Montrose. The Earl of Mar remaineth still about the prince; and if the queen will pursue him, the whole lords have promised, upon their faiths and honour, to relieve him. . . .

"In this meantime the queen is come to the castle of Edinburgh, conveyed by the Earl Bothwell, where she intendeth to remain until she have

¹ If she shall have to resist her enemies.

levied some forces of footmen and horsemen, that is, she minds to levy 500 footmen, and 200 horsemen. The money that she hath presently to do this, which is five thousand crowns, came from the font your lordship brought unto the baptism; the rest is to be reft and borrowed of Edinburgh, or the men of Lothian. . . .

"It will please your lordship also to haste these other letters to my Lord of Moray, and write unto him to come back again into Normandy, that he may be in readiness against my lords write unto him."²

These important letters of Melvil and Kirkaldy, hitherto quite unknown, establish some new facts in this portion of our history. We see clearly from them that the formidable coalition against the queen, which our historians describe as arising after the marriage with Bothwell, was fully formed nearly a month before that event; that its ramifications were extensive and deep; that Sir Robert Melvil, in whom the Scottish queen reposed implicit confidence, had joined the confederacy in the hope of rescuing his royal mistress from what he represents as an unwilling servitude; that the plot was well known to Monsieur de Croc, the French ambassador, who, after having in vain remonstrated with Mary against her predilection for Bothwell, gave it his cordial support; and lastly, that it had been communicated to Elizabeth, whose assistance was earnestly solicited.

But the English princess cherished high and peculiar ideas of prerogative; and while she blamed in severe terms the conduct of the Scottish queen, she was incensed at the bold and scurrilous tone in which Grange had dared to arraign the proceedings of his sovereign. Upon this point a remarkable conversation took place between her and Randolph in the palace garden, of which, fortunately, this minister, on the same day that it occurred, wrote an account to Leicester.

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, 8th May 1567, Grange to Bedford. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, May 11, 1567.

His expressions are forcible. "These news," said he, (meaning Mary's intended marriage,) "it pleased her majesty to tell me this day, [May 10,] walking in her garden, with great misliking of that queen's doing, which now she doth so much detest, that she is ashamed of her. Notwithstanding, her majesty doth not like that her subjects should by any force withstand that which they do see her bent unto; and yet doth she greatly fear, lest that Bothwell having the upper hand, he will rein again with the French, and either make away with the prince, or send him into France; which deliberation her majesty would gladly have stayed, but it is very uncertain how it may be brought to pass."

"Her majesty also told me that she had seen a writing sent from Grange to my Lord of Bedford, despitefully written against that queen, in such vile terms as she could not abide the hearing of it, wherein he made her worse than any common woman. She would not that any subject, what cause soever there be proceeding from the prince, or whatsoever her life and behaviour is, should discover that unto the world; and thereof so utterly misliketh of Grange's manner of writing and doing, that she condemns him for one of the worst in that realm, seeming somewhat to warn me of my familiarity with him, and willing that I should admonish him of her misliking. In this manner of talk it pleased her majesty to retain me almost an hour."¹

It is now time that we return to the extraordinary course of events in Scotland, which fulfilled the predictions of Melvil and Grange. The Church was ordered to proclaim the banns of the queen's marriage. This they peremptorily refused. Craig, one of the ministers, Knox being now absent, alleged, as his excuse, that Mary had sent no written command, and stated the com-

¹ This letter has never before been published, but is printed in the Appendix to the anonymous privately-printed work already mentioned, entitled "Maitland's Narrative." The Appendix consists of letters and other papers relating to the history of Mary, queen of Scotland.

mon report that she had been ravished, and was kept captive by Bothwell. Upon this the Justice-clerk brought him a letter signed by the queen herself, asserting the falsehood of such a story, and requiring his obedience. He still resisted, demanded to be confronted with the parties; and, in presence of the privy-council, where Bothwell sat, this undaunted minister laid to his charge the dreadful crimes of which he was suspected,—rape, adultery, and murder. To the accusation, no satisfactory answer was returned; but Craig, having exonerated his conscience, did not deem himself entitled to disobey the express command of his sovereign. He therefore proclaimed the banns in the High Church; but from the pulpit, and in presence of the congregation, added these appalling words:—"I take heaven and earth to witness, that I abhor and detest this marriage, as odious and slanderous to the world; and I would exhort the faithful to pray earnestly, that a union against all reason and good conscience may yet be overruled by God, to the comfort of this unhappy realm."²

This solemn warning, with the deep and general detestation of Bothwell, appeared to produce so little effect upon the queen, that the people considered the whole events as strange and supernatural: the report revived of this abandoned man having employed witchcraft, no uncommon resource in that age; and it was currently asserted that the marriage-day had been fixed by sorcerers.³

On the 12th of May Mary came in person into the high court at Edinburgh, and addressed the chancellor, the judges, and the nobility whom she had summoned for the occasion. Having understood, she said, that some doubts had been entertained by the lords, whether they ought to sit for the administration of the laws, their

² Anderson, vol. iv. p. 280. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, May 14, 1567. Also Original, State-paper Office, May 12, 1567, B.C., Drury to Cecil.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 12th or 13th May 1567. See also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., same to same, 20th May.

sovereign being detained in captivity at Dunbar by Lord Bothwell, she informed them that they might now dismiss their scruples; for although at first incensed at the conduct of that nobleman in the seizure of her person, she had forgiven him his offence in consequence of his subsequent good conduct, and meant to promote him to still higher honour.¹ On the same day, accordingly, he was created Duke of Orkney and Shetland, the queen with her own hands placing the coronet on his head;² and on the 15th of May the marriage took place at four in the morning in the presence-chamber at Holyrood. It was remarked that Mary was married in her mourn-

ing weeds. The ceremony was performed after the rite of the Protestant Church by the Bishop of Orkney; Craig, the minister of Edinburgh, being also present. In the sermon which he preached on the occasion, the bishop professed Bothwell's penitence for his former evil life, and his resolution to amend and conform himself to the Church.³ Few of the leading nobility were present, the event was unattended with the usual pageants and rejoicings, the people looked on in stern and gloomy silence; and next morning, a paper, with this ominous verse, was found fixed to the palace gates—

"Mense malas Maio nubere vulgus ait."⁴

CHAPTER VIII.

MARY.

1567—1569.

It was not to be expected that the late appalling events would be regarded with indifference by the people, the reformed clergy, or the more honest part of the nobility. Bothwell was universally reputed the principal murderer of the king; he was now the husband of their sovereign; and it was commonly reported that he had already laid his schemes to get possession of the young prince, who was kept at Stirling castle, under the governance of the Earl of Mar. Nor are we to wonder if men even looked with suspicion to the future conduct of the queen herself. She had apparently surrendered her mind to the dominion of a passion which rendered her deaf to every suggestion of delicacy and prudence, almost of virtue.

¹ Anderson, vol. i. p. 87.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 14th May 1567, Berwick, with its enclosure.

She had refused to listen to the entreaties and arguments of her best friends: to Lord Herries, who, on his knees, implored her not to marry the duke; to De Croc, the French ambassador, who urged the same request; to Beaton, her own ambassador; to Sir James Melvil, whose remonstrances against Bothwell nearly cost him his life.⁵ In the face of all this she had precipitated her marriage with this daring and wicked man; and public rumour still accused her of being a party to the murder. Of this last atrocious imputation, indeed, no direct proof was yet brought or offered; but even if we dismiss it as absolutely false, was any mother who acted such a part worthy to be in-

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, May 16, 1567. Also B.C., same to the same, Berwick, 20th May 1567.

⁴ The line is from Ovid. Fastorum, Lib. v. 490.

⁵ Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 176, 177.

trusted with the keeping and education of the heir to the throne?

So deeply felt were these considerations; that, as we have seen, a coalition for the destruction of Bothwell, and the preservation of the prince, was now widely organised in Scotland. Of this confederacy Lethington was secretly a member, although he still remained at Dunbar with the queen. Becoming suspected, however, Bothwell and his associate Huntly had resolved on Lethington's death; when Mary threw herself between them, and declared that, if a hair of his head perished, it should be at the peril of their lives and lands.) Thus preserved, he continued his intrigues, and only waited a favourable opportunity to make his escape and join his friends.¹ The plans of the associated lords had been communicated to Moray, then in France; they were sure to meet with the sanction of the Reformed Church, and the sympathy of the people. France encouraged them; and Robert Melvil and Grange, two leading men in the confederacy, had informed Cecil and Elizabeth of their intentions. Her answer was now anxiously expected.

But this princess, at all times jealous of the royal prerogative, was startled when she understood that the combined lords had not only resolved to prosecute Bothwell for the murder, and to rescue the queen from his thralldom, but to crown the prince.² In reply to the picture they drew of the violent restraint put upon their sovereign, she informed them that, if Mary's own letters to herself were to be trusted, she was in no thralldom, but had consented to all that had happened; she observed that "to crown her son during his mother's life was a matter, for example's sake, not to be digested by her or any other monarch;" but she added, that if they would deliver the young prince into her hands to be kept in England,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 6th May 1567. Melvil's Memoirs, p. 178.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 6th May 1567.

she felt inclined to support them. In the meantime the Earl of Bedford was ordered to hasten northward, that he might have an eye on their³ movements, and afford them some encouragement; whilst Cecil, her indefatigable minister, had so craftily laid his spies about the court, that he received instant information of the minutest movements of Mary and Bothwell, of the French intrigues carried on by De Croc, and of every step taken by the Lords of the Secret Council. For a brief season after their marriage, the queen and the duke appeared to forget that they had an enemy; and when Mary was informed of the private meetings of her opponents, she treated them with contempt. "Athole," said she, "is but feeble; for Argyle, I know well how to stop his mouth; as for Morton, his boots are but new pulled off" (alluding to his recent return from banishment) "and still soiled, he shall be sent back to his old quarters."⁴

In the meantime pageants and tourneys were got up to amuse the people; who observed that their queen, casting off her "mourning weed," assumed a gay dress, and frequently rode abroad with the duke, making a show of great contentment. Bothwell too was studious to treat her with respect, refusing to be covered in her presence, which she sometimes playfully resented, snatching his bonnet and putting it on his head;⁵ but there were times when his passionate and brutal temper broke through all restraint; and to those old friends who were still at court, and saw her in private, it was evident, that though she still seemed to love him, she was a changed and miserable woman. On one occasion, which is recorded by Sir James Melvil and De Croc, who were present, his

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, 11th May 1567, and copy, Elizabeth to Bedford, 17th May 1567.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 20th May 1567.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, 25th May 1567. Id., Ibid., B.C., Drury to Cecil, 20th May and 27th May 1567.

language was so bitter and disdainful, that, in a paroxysm of despair, she called for a knife to stab herself.¹

About a fortnight after the marriage she despatched the Bishop of Dunblane to France and Rome; his instructions, which have been preserved, were drawn up with much skill, and contained a laboured but unsatisfactory apology for her late conduct². It was necessary that an envoy should be sent on the same errand to Elizabeth; and here the choice of the queen was unfortunate, for she selected Robert Melvil,³ the secret but determined enemy of Bothwell, and one of the principal associates in the confederacy against him and herself. It is possible that this gentleman, who bore an honourable character in these times, may have considered, that in accepting this commission he should be able to serve his royal mistress; and whilst he appeared the active agent of her enemies, might secretly check the violence of their designs and labour for her preservation. But whatever may have been his motives, it is certain that he availed himself of the confidence with which he was treated, to reveal her purposes to his confederates, and in the execution of his mission acted for both parties. He received letters from Mary and Bothwell to Elizabeth and Cecil; he was instructed, as he has himself informed us, to excuse his mistress's recent marriage, and to persuade Elizabeth not to expose her to shame or declare herself an enemy;⁴ and at the same moment he carried letters to the English queen, from the lords of the coalition, who accused her of the murder of her husband, and now meditated her dethronement. So completely was he judged to be in their interest, that Morton, the leader of the enterprise, described him to Elizabeth as their trusty friend,

whom they had commissioned to declare their latent enterprise to her majesty.⁵

Bothwell's letter, which he sent by this envoy to Elizabeth, is worthy of notice. It is expressed in a bold, almost a kingly tone; he was aware, he said, of the queen's ill opinion of him, but he protested that it was undeserved, declared his resolution to preserve the amity between the two kingdoms, and professed his readiness to do her majesty all honour and service. Men of greater birth, so he concluded, might have been preferred to the high station he now occupied; none, he boldly affirmed, could have been chosen more zealous for the preservation of her majesty's friendship, of which she should have experience at any time it might be her pleasure to employ him. The style was different from the servility which so commonly ran through the addresses to this haughty queen, and marked the proud character of mind which, as much as his crimes, distinguished this daring man.⁶

Melvil now left Scotland (June 5) on his mission to the English court; and during his absence, the combined lords rapidly arranged their mode of attack and concentrated their forces. It was judged time to declare themselves; and the contrast between their former and their present conduct was abundantly striking. They who had combined with Bothwell in the conspiracy for the king's murder, and had signed the bond recommending him as a suitable husband for their queen, were now the loudest in their execration of the deed and their denunciations of the marriage. It was necessary for them, however, from

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Maitland to Cecil, 21st and 28th June 1567. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Morton and the lords to Elizabeth, Edinburgh, 26th June 1567.

² Keith, p. 388. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., 27th May 1567, Drury to Cecil. Also same to same, 20th May 1567.

³ Declaration of Robert Melvil. Hopetoun MSS.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwell to Elizabeth, 5th June 1567. Bothwell at the same time wrote to Cecil and Sir N. Throckmorton, by Robert Melvil. His letter to Cecil is in the State-paper Office, dated June 5, that to Throckmorton in the possession of Mr Rodd, bookseller, Great Newport Street.

this very circumstance, to act with that caution which accomplices in guilt must adopt when they attempt to expose and punish a companion. If Morton, Argyle, Huntly, Lethington, and Balfour, possessed evidence to convict Bothwell and his servants of the murder of the king, it was not to be forgotten that Bothwell could re criminate, and prove, by the production of the bond, that they had consented to the same crime. We know, too, that he had shewn this bond to some of the actual murderers; and unless they were slain in hot blood, or made away with before they had an opportunity of speaking out, the whole dark story might be revealed. These apprehensions, which seem to me not to have been sufficiently kept in mind, account for the extraordinary circumstances which soon after occurred.

Mary had summoned her nobles to attend her with their feudal forces on an expedition to Liddesdale, but most of them had already left court, and neglected the order. Huntly, who had been much in her confidence, corresponded with her enemies.¹ Lethington, the secretary, whom we have seen carried prisoner to Dunbar, pretended still to be devoted to her service, but betrayed all her purposes to the confederate lords; and at length, finding a good opportunity, suddenly left the court. Moray, it was said, had come to England, and taken a decided part against her, and Hume, one of the most warlike and powerful Border lords, was active in his opposition.² No army, therefore, could be assembled; so detested indeed was Bothwell, that even the soldiers whom he had in pay incurred his suspicion; and it was reported he only trusted one company, commanded by Captain Cullen, a man suspected to be deeply implicated in the king's murder.³

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., 20th May 1567.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 7th June 1567, B.C., Drury to Cecil. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 16th May 1567, B.C., Drury to Cecil. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., 25th May 1567.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to

Under these circumstances of discouragement, the queen and the duke had retired to Borthwick castle, a seat of the Laird of Crookston's, about ten miles from Edinburgh, when the confederates, led by Hume and the other Border chiefs, made a rapid night march, and suddenly surrounded the place. They were nearly a thousand strong; and along with him were Morton, Mar, Lindsay, Grange, and their followers, who deemed themselves sure of their prize; but Bothwell escaped through a postern in the back wall, to Haddington. Here he remained a day in concealment, and then reached Dunbar, where he was next day joined by the queen, who fled in man's apparel, booted and spurred, from Borthwick, and thus eluded notice.⁴ Disappointed in their first attempt, the confederates marched to the capital, which they reached at four in the morning, broke open the gates, took possession of the city, and published a proclamation, declaring that they had risen in arms to revenge the death of the king and the forcible abduction of their sovereign.⁵ Here they were soon after joined by the Earl of Athole and the noted Lethington, a man who had belonged to all parties, and had deserted all, yet whose vigour of mind, and great capacity for state affairs, made him still welcome, wherever he turned himself. High wages were now offered to any volunteers who would come forward, and to give greater publicity to the cause for which they fought, a banner was displayed, on which was painted the body of the murdered king, lying under a tree as he had been first found, with the young prince kneeling beside it, and underneath the motto, "Judge and

Cecil, B.C., 31st May 1567, with an undated Letter, probably an enclosure.

⁴ Sloane MSS., Ayscough, 3199, British Museum, copy, John Beaton to his brother, 11th to 17th June. Printed by Laing, vol. ii. p. 106. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, 12th June 1567.

⁵ Anderson, vol. i. p. 131. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., 12th June 1567, Drury to Cecil. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, same to same, B.C., 14th June 1567.

avenge my cause, O Lord." The sight of this, and the tenor of their proclamation, produced a strong effect; and the confederates had the satisfaction to find, not only that the common people and the magistrates warmly espoused their cause, but that Sir James Balfour, who enjoyed the highest confidence with Bothwell, and commanded the castle, was ready to join them. This infamous man had, as we have seen, been deeply implicated in the murder, and was reported to have some secret papers regarding it in his keeping. His anticipated defection, therefore, gave new spirit to the party.¹

Whilst such was the state of things in the city, Mary and Bothwell had assembled their followers at Dunbar, and such was the effect of the royal names that many of the Border barons and gentry deserted Hume, and joined the queen's camp. Along with them came the Lords Seton, Yester, and Borthwick, so that within a short time her force amounted to about 2000 men. With these Mary and the Duke of Orkney instantly marched against the enemy, leaving Dunbar on the 14th June, and advancing that night to Seton. Next morning she caused a proclamation to be read to the army, in which her opponents were arraigned as traitors, who for their private ends had determined to overturn the government. They pretended, she said, to prosecute the duke her husband for the king's murder, after he had been already fully acquitted of the crime; they declared their resolution to rescue herself from captivity; but she was no captive, as they who had themselves recommended her marriage with the duke well knew; they had taken arms, as they affirmed, to defend the prince her son—but he was in their own hands, and how, then, could they think him in danger? In short, all was a mere cover for their treason, and this she trusted soon to prove, by the aid of her faithful subjects, on the persons

of these unnatural rebels.² Her next step was to intrench herself on Carberry hill, within the old works which had been thrown up by the English army previous to the battle of Pinkie.

Mary here awaited her opponents, who shewed no less alacrity to engage, marching from Edinburgh on the morning of Sunday the 15th, and taking the route to Musselburgh, which soon brought them in sight of their adversaries. Monsieur de Croc, the French ambassador, was then with the queen. He had disapproved of her marriage; and we have seen that he had even encouraged the confederates, with a view of having the prince sent to France;³ but he now made an attempt at mediation, and carried a message to Morton and Glencairn, assuring them of their sovereign's disposition to pardon the past, on condition that they returned to their duty. "We have not come here," said Glencairn, when he heard this proposal, "to solicit pardon for ourselves, but rather to give it to those who have offended." "We are in arms," added Morton, "not against our queen, but the Duke of Orkney, the murderer of her husband. Let him be delivered up, or let her majesty remove him from her company, and we shall yield her obedience."⁴

It was evident from this reply that there was little hope of peace; and the confederate lords were the more determined, as an indisposition to fight was beginning to be apparent in the royal troops, some men at that moment stealing over to the enemy. Observing this, Bothwell, who was never deficient in personal courage, rode forward, and, by a herald, sent his defi-

² Spottiswood, p. 206, Beaton to his brother, Laing, vol. ii. pp. 106, 110. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., 14th June 1567.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., 9th June 1567. Also same to same, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 31st May 1567. Also 15th June 1567, Bedford to Leicester, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C.

⁴ Keith, p. 401. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Scrope to Cecil, Carlisle, 17th June 1567, B.C. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, 18th and 19th June 1567.

¹ Beaton to his brother, from Sloane MSS., 3199. Laing, Append. vol. ii. p. 106. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Scrope to Cecil, B.C., Carlisle, June 16, 1567.

ance to any one that dared arraign him of the king's murder. His gage was accepted by James Murray of Tullibardine, the same baron who had, it was said, affixed the denunciation to the Tolbooth gate; but Bothwell refused to enter the lists with one who was not his peer, and singled out Morton, who readily answered, that he would fight him instantly on foot and with two-handed swords. Upon this, Lord Lindsay of the Byres interfered. The combat, he contended, belonged of right to him, as the relative of the murdered king, and he implored the associate lords by the services he had done, and still hoped to do, that they would grant him the courtesy to meet the duke in this quarrel. It was deemed proper to humour Lindsay; and Morton presented him with his own sword, a weapon well known and highly valued, as having been once wielded by his renowned ancestor, Archibald Bell-the-Cat. Lindsay then proceeded to arm himself; and kneeling down before the ranks, audibly implored God to strengthen his arm to punish the guilty, and protect the innocent. Bothwell too seemed eager to fight, but at this critical juncture Mary interfered, and resolutely forbade the encounter.¹

By this time it was evident that desertion was spreading rapidly in her army, nor had her remonstrances the least effect: she implored them to advance, assured them of victory, taunted them with cowardice, but all to so little purpose, that when Grange, at the head of his troops, began to wheel round the hill so as to turn their flank, the panic became general, and the queen and Bothwell were left with only sixty gentlemen, and the band of hagbutters.² It was his design to throw himself between Dunbar and this little force, thus cutting off Both-

well's escape; but Mary perceived it, and sent the Laird of Ormiston to demand a parley. This was immediately granted, and when Grange rode forward, he assured his sovereign of their readiness to obey her, if that man who now stood beside her, and was guilty of the king's murder, were dismissed. To this she replied, that if the lords promised to return to their allegiance, she would leave the duke and put herself in their hands. He carried this message to his brethren, and came back with a solemn assurance that, on such conditions, they were ready to receive and obey her as their sovereign. Hearing this, the queen, ever too credulous and apt to act on the impulse of the moment, held a moment's conversation aside with Bothwell. What passed can only be conjectured; he appeared to waver, and remonstrate, but when she gave him her hand, he took farewell, turned his horse's head and rode off the field, none of the confederates offering the least impediment.³ It was the last time they ever met.

Mary now waited for some time till he was out of danger, and then, coming forward, exclaimed: "Laird of Grange, I surrender to you on the conditions you have specified in the name of the lords." That baron then took her hand, which he kissed; and holding her horse's bridle, conducted her down the hill to the confederates. On reaching the lines, she was met by the nobles, who received her on their knees. "Here, madam," said Morton, "is the true place where your grace should be; and here we are ready to defend and obey you as loyally as ever nobility of this realm did your progenitors." So fully felt was this sen-

¹ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Haryson to Cecil, probably June 16, 1567. The name is scored out but readable. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, June 19, 1567, with enclosure. Calderwood, MS. History, Ayscough, 4735, p. 668. Also Spottiswood, p. 207.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Cecil, June 17, 1567.

³ Raumer, quoting De Croc's Despatches, pp. 100, 101. De Croc says in his letter to Catherine de Medici, "Bothwell became greatly alarmed, and at last asked the queen whether she would keep the promise of fidelity which she had made to him. She answered yes, and gave him her hand upon it. He then mounted his horse, and fled with a few attendants." All this, however, must, as I have said, be conjecture. De Croc was not present: after his unsuccessful attempt at mediation, he had retired to Edinburgh. Spottiswood, p. 207.

ment, that when some of the common soldiers began to utter opprobrious language, Grange drew his sword and compelled them into silence.

Such was the extraordinary scene which led to the escape of Bothwell, and it demands a moment's reflection. The confederate nobles had declared that their object in taking arms was to bring this infamous man to justice, as the murderer of the king; yet, at the moment when they had him in their power, he was permitted to escape. Nothing could appear more inconsistent; and yet, perhaps, looking to the motives which have been already pointed out, it will not be found unnatural. He, indeed, was the principal murderer, but Morton, Huntly, Lethington, and Argyle were aware that, if driven to his defence, he could bring them in as accomplices. They allowed him to escape, because he was infinitely more easily dealt with as a fugitive than as a prisoner.

But to return to Mary. Encouraged by the first appearances of courtesy, she declared her wish to communicate with the Hamiltons, who, the night before, had advanced in considerable strength to Linlithgow. This was peremptorily refused, upon which she broke into reproaches, appealed to their promise, and demanded how they dared to treat her as a prisoner! Her questions and her arguments were unheeded, and she now bitterly repented her precipitation. Her spirit, however, instead of being subdued, was rather roused by their baseness. She called for Lindsay, one of the fiercest of the confederate barons, and bade him give her his hand. He obeyed. "By the hand," said she, "which is now in yours, I'll have your head for this."¹ Unfortunate princess! When she spoke thus, little did she know how soon that unrelenting hand, which had been already stained with Riccio's blood, would fall still heavier yet upon herself.

It was now evening, and the queen,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., June 18, 1567. Also copy, State-paper Office, probably June 16, 1567, Haryson to Cecil.

riding between Morton and Athole, was conducted to the capital, where she awoke to all the horrors of her situation.² She was a captive in the hands of her worst enemies: the populace, as she rode through the streets, received her with yells and execrations; the women pressing round, accused her in coarse terms as an adulteress stained with her husband's blood; and the soldiers, unrestrained by their officers, kept constantly waving before her eyes the banner on which was painted the murdered king, and the prince crying for vengeance. At first they shut her up in the provost's house, where she was strictly guarded. It was in vain she remonstrated against this breach of faith; in vain she implored them to remember that she was their sovereign: they were deaf to her entreaties, and she was compelled to pass the night, secluded even from her women, in solitude and tears. But the morning only brought new horrors. The first object which met her eyes was the same dreadful banner, which, with a refinement in cruelty, the populace had hung up directly opposite her windows. The sight brought on an agony of despair and delirium, in the midst of which she tore the dress from her person, and, forgetting that she was almost naked, attempted in her frenzy to address the people.³ This piteous spectacle could not be seen without producing an impression in her favour; and the citizens were taking measures for her rescue, when she was suddenly removed to Holyrood. Here a hurried consultation was held, and in the evening she was sent a prisoner to Lochleven, a castle situated in the midst of a lake, belonging to Douglas, one of the confederates, and from which escape was deemed impossible. In her journey thither, she was treated with studied indignity, exposed to the gaze of the mob, miserably clad, mounted on a sorry hackney, and

² Letter of John Beaton to his brother, Sloane MSS., Ayscough, 3199, printed by Laing, vol. ii. p. 106.

³ John Beaton to his brother, 17th June 1567, Laing, vol. ii., Appendix, p. 106.

placed under the charge of Lindsay and Ruthven, men of savage manners, even in this age, and who were esteemed peculiarly fitted for the task.¹ Against this base conduct it is said that Grange loudly remonstrated, and that, to silence his reproaches, the lords produced an intercepted letter, written by the queen from her prison in Edinburgh to Bothwell, in which she assured him that she would never desert him. The story is told by Melvil, but I have found no trace of it; and Grange had already manifested such bitter hostility to his sovereign, that his sincerity may be questioned, especially as he continued to act with his former associates.²

Thus far the measures of the confederates were crowned with success. The queen was a prisoner in their hands; they were possessed of the person of the heir-apparent, who had been committed to the governance of Mar, one of their principal leaders; Bothwell was a fugitive, and they were sustained in everything they had done by the support of the ministers of the Reformed Church, and by the general voice of the people. For the present, therefore, all was deemed secure; and, on considering their future policy, they determined to pause till it was seen with what feelings the late events were regarded by England and France. With this view they lost no time in despatching letters, first to Elizabeth, and after a little interval to the King of France. To the English queen they declared that their only motive in taking up arms had been the punishment of the king's murder; they assured her that, so soon as this was accomplished, their sovereign should be restored to freedom; and as for the coronation of the young prince, that such an idea had never been contemplated. In conclusion, they expressed a hope that she would consider their want of money, and send them the sum of three or

¹ John Beaton to his brother, 17th June 1567, Laing, vol. ii., Appendix, p. 106. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., June 18, 1567.

² Melvil's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 185.

four thousand crowns to hire soldiers, in return for which they were ready to refuse the offers of France, and submit to be wholly guided by England.³

To France their letters were full of amity, but more general and guarded. De Croc, the ambassador, had at once perceived the advantage of securing the friendship of the successful party. Although pretending a great zeal for Mary's service, he really favoured the confederates, and had not only proposed that the young prince should be brought up under the care of the king his master, but advised them to keep the Queen of Scots securely, now that they had her in their hands.⁴ To him the confederates gave fair words, but prudently determined not to commit themselves till they heard more definitely from England. They at the same time entered into communication with Moray and the Earl of Lennox, whose presence they required in Scotland.⁵

At this crisis, (June 20,) according to the evidence of Cecil's journal, which has been, ~~on insufficient grounds~~ I think, suspected of forgery, the Lords of the Secret Council, through the treachery of a servant of Bothwell's, became possessed of a box or casket, which was said to contain some private letters and sonnets addressed by the queen to the duke. This was that celebrated silver casket, which afterwards made so much noise, and in which, as asserted by the enemies of Mary, were found decided proofs of her guilt. The whole details connected with the story are suspicious; nor is it the least suspicious of these circumstances, that in the confidential letters of Drury to Cecil, written at this period from day to day, and em-

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Forster to Cecil, June 20, 1567. The messenger's name was John Rede, with Instructions enclosed. Also State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, June 20, 1567. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, June 23, 1567.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., June 20, 1567.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., July 9, 1567. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., July 12. Same to same, and July 19, Scrope to Cecil.

bracing the most minute information of everything which passed, there is no allusion to such a seizure.) It is, however, to be remembered that Morton, Lethington, and Sir James Balfour, the three great leaders of the confederacy, were themselves deeply implicated in the assassination of Darnley, and that they would be exceedingly likely to suppress such a discovery, till the contents of the casket were rigidly examined. (They knew that Bothwell was in possession of the bond for the king's murder, and the casket might contain it, or other papers equally conclusive. It is certain that, on the day of this reported discovery, (June 20,) Morton and his associates despatched George Douglas, one of the most confidential of their number, on a secret mission to the Earl of Bedford, and it is possible his message may have related to it.¹ In this mysterious state we must leave the matter at present.

On hearing of the late extraordinary events in Scotland, Elizabeth's feelings were of a divided kind. Her ideas of the inviolability of the royal prerogative were offended by the imprisonment of the queen. However great were Mary's faults, or even her guilt, it did not accord with the high creed of the English princess that any subjects should dare to expose or punish them; and we have seen that, in a former conversation with Randolph, she alluded to Grange's letters to Bedford in terms of much bitterness.² But notwithstanding this, she was fully alive to the necessity of supporting a Protestant party in Scotland; and she well knew that nothing could so effectually promote her views, as to induce the confederate lords to refuse the offers of France, and deliver to her the young prince to be educated in Protestant principles at the court of England. Nor was she ignorant that the able and crafty men who directed their proceedings, had deter-

mined to refuse every petition for the restoration of their sovereign to liberty, an event probably as much deprecated by Elizabeth as by themselves.³ It was perfectly safe for the English queen, therefore, to give fair promises to Mary, and to remonstrate with the confederates upon this subject. Such being her views, she despatched Robert Melvil, who was then in England, with a letter to his mistress; and ordered Sir Nícholas Throckmorton, one of her ablest diplomatists, to hold himself in readiness to proceed on a mission to Scotland.

Meanwhile the Lords of the Secret Council, who had suffered the principal actor in the king's murder to escape, became active in their search for inferior delinquents. Captain Cullen, a daring follower of Bothwell's, had been seized on their first advance to Edinburgh, and soon after two others, Captain Blacater and Sebastian de Villours, were apprehended. The foreigner was soon discharged, but Blacater was tried for the murder, convicted, and executed before an immense concourse of spectators who eagerly surrounded the scaffold. To their disappointment he died solemnly calling God to witness his innocence, and revealed no particulars.⁴ Of Cullen, who, it was reported, on his apprehension, had discovered the whole details of the conspiracy, we hear no more. It is possible he may have been commanded to say nothing, because he might have told too much.

These efforts of the confederates to bring the guilty to justice did not satisfy the people; it was suspected that amongst their leaders were some who dreaded any strict examination; and Morton and Lethington, distrusting the fickle nature of the lower classes, began to dread a reaction in the queen's favour. This was the more alarming, as the rival faction of the Hamiltons had recently mustered

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bedford to Cecil, B.C., June 23, 1567. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton and the Lords to Bedford, June 20, 1567.

² Randolph to Leicester, May 10, 1567. See supra, p. 250.

³ Gonzalez Apuntamientos, p. 322. Memorias de la Real Acad. de la Historia, vol. vii.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., June 25; also B.C., June 27, 1567, same to same. Also, Historie of James the Sext, p. 15, Bannatyne edition.

in great strength. The head of this party was nominally the Duke of Chastelherault, now in France, but really his brother, the Archbishop of St Andrews. Failing Mary and her son, the duke was next heir to the throne; and he and his advisers had acuteness enough to penetrate into the views of Morton and his party. They saw clearly that the consequence of the continued captivity of their sovereign, must be the coronation of the young prince, his protection by Elizabeth, and the establishment of a regency, under which Lennox, Morton, or Moray, would engross the whole power of the state. Having been generally opposed to Mary and her marriage, her captivity was not in itself a matter which gave them any very deep concern; but in weighing the two evils, its continuance and a regency, or her restoration and a third marriage, they chose what they thought the least, and determined to make an effort for her restoration.

For this purpose a convention of the lords of their party was held at Dumbarton, (June 29,) and proclamation made for all good subjects to be ready, on nine hours' warning, to take arms for the delivery of the queen.¹ They were here joined by Argyle and Huntly, who had deserted the confederates; by Herries, a baron of great power and vigour of character; and by Crawford, with the Lords Seton and Fleming; whilst the Archbishop of St Andrews, and the celebrated Lesley, bishop of Ross, directed their councils.² Their deliberations were watched and reported to his court by De Croc, the French ambassador, who found them, as was to be anticipated, more inclined to France than England.³

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil. He states that "the confederates are very anxious for Lennox's return into Scotland, to beard the Hamiltons." June 20, 1567. Also same to same, June 25, 1567, State-paper Office, B.C. Also same to same, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., June 29; and same to same, July 1, 1567, B.C.

² Bond signed by the Convention at Dumbarton, June 29, 1567, copy, State-paper Office, and printed by Keith, p. 436.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., June 29 1567.

It was not to be expected that the Lords of the Secret Council could view such proceedings without anxiety, and they thought it prudent to strengthen themselves by a more intimate union with the party of the Reformed Church. Here, indeed, was their strongest hold; for the Reformed clergy were sternly opposed to the queen, they firmly believed that she was participant in the king's murder, and they possessed the highest influence with the people.

On their taking possession of the capital, immediately after their unsuccessful attempt at Borthwick, Glencairn, one of the fiercest zealots of these times, had signalled his hatred of Popery by an attack upon the royal chapel at Holyrood, in which he demolished the altar, and destroyed the shrines and images. This attack, although condemned by some of the party, was not unwelcome to the ministers, and on the 25th of June an assembly of the Church was held at Edinburgh. In this meeting of his friends and brethren, John Knox reappeared. This great leader of the Reformed Church had fled, as we have seen,⁴ from the capital immediately after the assassination of Riccio, and had deemed it unsafe to return till the queen was imprisoned in Lochleven. (Of his history in this interval we know little); he probably resided chiefly with his relatives in the neighbourhood of Berwick, and he was in England at the time of the king's murder;⁵ but about a month after that event, he again entered into communication with Bedford and Cecil;⁶ and now that all fear from the animosity of the queen was at an end, and the chief power in the government once more in the hands of his friends, he again took his part in the discussions which agitated the country.

In his retirement he appears to have lost nothing of his wonted fire. He was animated by the same stern, uncompromising, and unscrupulous

⁴ Supra, p. 223.

⁵ M'Crie's Life of Knox, p. 259.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, March 11, 1566-7.

spirit as before, and the crisis appeared to him to be highly favourable for the complete demolition of Popery, and the permanent establishment of the Protestant faith. Henceforward we must regard him as the leader of the Reformed Church; and upon certain conditions he declared himself ready to give his cordial assistance to the confederates. He stipulated that they should recognise the parliament held at Edinburgh in 1560, and its acts as laws of the realm. It will be recollected that this was the famous parliament in which Popery had been overthrown, and the reformed religion established; and that, notwithstanding all the efforts of Elizabeth and the Protestants, Mary had never given her consent to its decrees. The confederates, who were mostly, if not all, Protestants, of course experienced no such scruples, but embraced the proposal at once, and entered into the strictest union with Knox and his party. Nor was this all. They agreed to restore the patrimony of the Church, which had been seized and devoted to civil uses; to intrust the education of youth in all colleges and public seminaries to the reformed clergy; to put down idolatry (so they denominated the Roman Catholic faith) by force of arms, if necessary; to watch over the education of the prince, committing him to some godly and grave governor; and to punish to the uttermost the murderers of the king.¹ In return for this, Knox adopted the cause of the Lords of the Secret Council (such was the title by which the confederacy against Mary and Bothwell was now known) with all the energy belonging to his character. From former experience, none knew better than this extraordinary man the strength of popular opinion when once roused, and few understood better how to rouse it by that style of pulpit eloquence which he had adopted:—earnest, sententious,

satirical, colloquial, often coarse, but always to the point, and always successful. There can be little doubt, I think, that the great secondary cause of the establishment of the Reformation in Scotland was the force of popular opinion, roused, directed, and kept in continual play, by the sermons and addresses of the clergy. Such an engine was not permitted in England by Elizabeth and her ministers; Knox regretted it, and repeatedly requested licence to preach at Berwick, but he was invariably refused.

An attempt was made at this time to bring over the Hamiltons and their associates to the confederates;² and letters were written in the name of the Church to Argyle, Huntly, Herries, and others, requesting their presence at Edinburgh on the 20th July, to which day they had adjourned their Assembly. To enforce this, Knox, with three colleagues, Douglas, Row, and Craig, waited upon them, and urged the necessity of their attendance, that they might labour for the re-establishment of the policy and patrimony of the Church. But the Hamiltons suspected the overtures; and the Secret Council, who dreaded lest delay should give strength to their enemies, determined to compel the queen to abdicate the government in favour of the prince her son.

The known character of Mary, however, rendered this daring resolution a matter of no easy accomplishment. Her confinement in Lochleven had been accompanied with circumstances of great rigour; she was there placed under the charge of Lindsay and Ruthven, men familiar with blood, and of coarse and fierce manners. The lady of the castle, Margaret Erskine, daughter of Lord Erskine, had been mistress to the queen's father, James the Fifth, and was mother to the Earl of Moray. She had been afterwards married to Sir Robert Douglas; and their son, William Douglas, who was proprietor of the castle, had early joined the con-

¹ Knox, History, p. 449. Spottiswood, p. 210. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, B.C., Berwick, June 25, 1567. Also MS. Letter, B.C., June 27, 1567, same to the same.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Berwick, Drury to Cecil, June 25, 1567.

federacy. She herself is said to have been a woman of a proud and imperious spirit, and was accustomed to boast that she was James's lawful wife, and her son Moray, his legitimate issue, who had been supplanted by the queen.¹

Under such superintendents, Mary could not expect a lenient captivity; but her spirit was unbroken, though Villeroy, a gentleman sent to her by the King of France, was denied all access, and it became impossible for her to receive advices of the proceedings of the Hamiltons, from the strictness with which all communication was cut off.² She had sent, as we have seen, Robert Melvil on a mission to the English queen soon after her marriage. During his stay in England those sad calamities had occurred with which we are acquainted; and now that she was a prisoner, shut out from all friendly intercourse, and fed only with the deferred hopes that sicken the heart, she looked anxiously for his return.

But this servant had, as we have seen, become the envoy of her enemies. During his stay in England he had acted as the secret agent of the confederate lords, who had imprisoned her; he solicited money to support them in their enterprise; he received orders from them to supply himself out of this sum when it was advanced by Elizabeth; he was cautioned against declaring himself too openly, as something had come to the ears of the French ambassador:³ he proposed to the English queen the project for Mary's "demitting the crown" in favour of her son, with which the lords who had imprisoned her had made him acquainted; and, on his arrival in Edinburgh, his first

meeting was neither with his own sovereign nor the friends who had combined for her delivery, but with the Lords of the Secret Council. He assured them of the support of the English queen in the "honourable enterprise" in which they had engaged; he informed them that Elizabeth had agreed to Mary's resignation of the crown, provided it came of her own consent; and he then, before visiting his mistress in her prison at Lochleven, addressed a letter to Cecil, from which, as it contains his own account of his negotiation, I think it right to give this extract:—"It may please your honour," says he, "to be advertised, I came to this town [Edinburgh] upon the 29th of June, and have⁴ imparted the queen's majesty's good disposition in the assisting and partaking with the lords to prosecute the murderers of the king, and to preserve the prince in the custody of the Earl of Mar. Whereof the said lords most humbly thank her highness. The whole particularities that I had your honour's advice in, according to the queen your sovereign's meaning, is not at this present resolved on, by reason the most part of noblemen are gone to their houses, to repose them and their friends, except the Earls of Morton and Athole, with my Lord Hume, my Lord Lethington, Sir James Balfour, captain of the castle, who is daily in council with them, and Mr James Makgill and the justice-clerk. The cause of their going from this town is by some bragging of the Hamiltons, with the Earl of Huntly, minding to convene their forces and make their colour [pretence] for the delivery of the queen; albeit, it be credibly reported that they fear the king's murder to be laid to some of their charges; I mean the Bishop of St Andrews: wherefore, it was thought most convenient that the noblemen and gentlemen should in the meantime have their friends in readiness.

"Before my coming, the lords did write divers instructions unto me, besides a letter written to the queen's

¹ Keith, p. 403, note 6.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 27th June, 1567. Also Ibid., same to same, June 20, 1567.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Melvil to Cecil, 1st July 1567; also MS. Letter, Melvil to Cecil, June, 1567; and MS. Letter, in cipher with the decipher affixed, David Robertson to Melvil, June 26, 1567; also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earls of Athole, Morton, and others, to Elizabeth, 26th June, 1567.

* In Orig. "has."

majesty,¹ subscribed by them. The effect whereof was, that as they did understand by me of the good inclination [of] your mistress and council being addicted to help them in their most need,—so, for their parts, their goodwill to do her majesty service, before all other, with time shall be declared. As for their dealing with France, they have used them so discreetly, as neither France may have any just cause to be offended, and the queen your sovereign be well pleased.

"The lords presently needs but money, for they have already listed divers men of war, and is taking up more. The Hamiltons is judged to be maintained by the queen's² substance, and countenanced by France to have money, seeing France is in doubt to persuade our noblemen. Wherefore, sir, it is most needful that with all expedition money may be procured of the queen your sovereign, and sent thither with Sir Nicholas Fragmarton,³ or by some of the Borders, for that necessity that they will be prest to, will be within eight or ten days, which I thought meet to advertise your honour of; and what order shall be taken for my going to the queen is not agreed upon, by reason the most part of lords are not present; and my Lord Lethington being greatly empesched with affairs, might not have leisure to concur at length, but is glad to understand of the care your honour has that we should do all things by justice and moderation. And that the queen your sovereign may be content with your conference with me, he does well like of your advice in divers heads; always, there is matter enough probable⁴ to proceed upon that matter we first agreed upon, and farther is thought expedient. Ye shall with diligence be advertised; and refers the rest to my Lord of Lethington's letter, who does repose himself upon the care he hopes your honour will continue in,

for to set forward their honourable enterprise; and the lords, for their part, will accord with your ambassador to keep the prince: and to her highness' desire will put him in the custody of her majesty, if at any time hereafter they shall be minded to suffer him go in any other country. The whole novels⁵ here I refer to my Lord of Lethington's letter; and as I learn further your honour shall be advertised. . . : At Edinburgh the 1st of July. R. Melvil."⁶

This letter sufficiently explains itself, and proves that Melvil, although nominally the envoy of Mary, was now acting for the confederates. It unveils, also, the real intentions of Elizabeth; it shews that her object in despatching her ambassador, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, was professedly to procure the queen's liberty; but really to encourage the confederates, to attach them to her service, to obtain possession of the prince if possible, to induce the captive queen to resign the crown, and to hold out to Moray, with whom she, Melvil, and the Lords of the Secret Council were now in treaty, the hope of returning to his country and becoming the chief person in the government.⁷ It appears to me also, (but this is conjecture,) that the mysterious sentence⁸ in which Melvil informs Cecil that Lethington liked his advice, and that at any rate they had proof enough to proceed on the matter first agreed upon, related to the scheme of compelling their sovereign to agree to their wishes by a threat of bringing her to a public trial for the murder of the king.

On the same day on which this letter was written (July 1) Melvil repaired to Lochleven, and was admitted to an interview with Mary, in which he delivered to her the letter of the

⁵ Novels—news.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Robert Melvil to Cecil, Edinburgh, 1st July 1567.

⁷ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, R. Melvil to Cecil, July 8, 1567. Kernes in Fife.

⁸ "He [Lethington] does well like of your advice in divers heads; always there is matter enough probable [provable] to proceed upon that matter we first agreed upon, and farther is thought expedient."

¹ Elizabeth.

² Mary's.

³ Sir N. Throckmorton.

⁴ Probable here used in the sense of provable.

Queen of England. At this conference Lindsay, Ruthven, and Douglas insisted on being present, according to the orders which they had received from the Lords of the Secret Council. The queen was thus cut off from all private conference with her servant, and she complained bitterly of such rigour, but could obtain no redress. Eight days afterwards, however, Melvil was again sent by them to Lochleven, and permitted to see his royal mistress alone. In this interview he endeavoured (according to his own declaration¹) to persuade Mary to renounce Bothwell, but this she peremptorily refused; and her obduracy upon this point excited the utmost indignation in the lords and the people. Knox, now all powerful with the lower ranks, thundered out, as Throckmorton expressed it to Cecil, *cannon-hot* against her; and so thoroughly convinced were his party, and some of the leaders, of her guilt, that it became generally reported she would be brought to a public trial. So much was this the case, that early in July Lord Herries held a meeting with Lord Scrope, in which, when the English warden attempted to detach him from Mary's interests, he declared that, if Morton and his faction would set his mistress at liberty, he was ready to assist them in prosecuting Darnley's murderers; but if they intended to bring the queen to her trial by open assize, he would defend her, though forsaken by all the world.²

In the meantime Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, Elizabeth's ambassador, left the English court on his mission to Scotland. We have seen that the English queen, in her message to Morton and his confederates, by Robert Melvil, had encouraged them in their enterprise, and promised them her support; but her instructions to Throckmorton, although severely worded, were more favourable to the captive

queen. He was directed, indeed, to express her grief and indignation that decided steps had not been taken for the punishment of the king's murderer, to point out the mortal reproach she had incurred by her marriage, and to assure her that at first she had resolved to give up all farther communication with one who seemed by her acts so reckless of her honour; but he was instructed to add that the late rebellious conduct of her nobles had softened these feelings. Whatever had been Mary's conduct, it did not (she said) belong to subjects to assume the sword, or to punish the faults of the prince; and so much did she commiserate and resent her imprisonment, that she was prepared to compel her nobles to restore her to liberty. At the same time she was ready to lend her countenance and assistance for the prosecution of the king's murder, and the preservation of the young prince. In conclusion, Throckmorton was enjoined to declare to the Scottish queen the charges with which she was loaded by her subjects, and to hear her answers and defence.³

On crossing the Border, the ambassador was met by Lethington, the secretary, at Coldingham, who conducted him to Fastcastle, a strong fortalice overhanging the German Ocean.⁴ Here he was received by Hume, the lord of the castle, with Sir James Melvil; and in a conference held with the Scottish secretary, it was soon apparent that he had to deal with those who were as crafty, cautious, and diplomatic as himself or his mistress. On the same day he wrote to Cecil, and informed him that the Scottish lords dreaded Elizabeth's caprice. They assured themselves, he said, "that if they ran her fortune, she would leave them in the briars," and desert them after they had com-

¹ British Museum, Cotton MSS., Caligula, C. i. f. 3, 6, 8. Copy, Instructions to Sir N. Throckmorton, 30th June 1567.

² Robertson's Appendix, No. xxii., Throckmorton to Cecil, 12th July 1567. Fastcastle is described by him as "very little and very strong: a place fitter to lodge prisoners than folks at liberty."

¹ Robert Melvil's Declaration, Hopetoun, MSS. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir James Melvil to Drury, Edinburgh, 8th July 1567.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Scrope to Cecil, B C., Carlisle, 9th July 1567.

mitted themselves. Already they complained that she had departed from her first promises to Robert Melvil, and had sent a cold answer to their last letter ; and as for her proposal to set their sovereign at liberty, if sincere in this, it was plain (they said) that the Queen of England sought their ruin ; for were Mary once free, it would be absurd to talk of the prosecution of the murder, or, indeed, of any other condition.

Touching their intended policy to France, a subject upon which Elizabeth was exceedingly jealous, Throckmorton found them resolved to hold, for the present, the same cautious course which they pursued to England, neither positively refusing nor accepting the overtures of the French king. These, indeed, as Lethington reported them to the English ambassador, were of an extraordinary description ; and if Mary owed little gratitude to Elizabeth, she was certainly still less obliged to her royal relatives at that court, whose exertions at this moment were strenuously devoted to the setting up a party in Scotland composed of her enemies, the confederate lords. In accomplishing this, they were ready to sacrifice the captive queen. It was suggested that the government and the young prince should be managed by a council of the lords, acting, of course, under French influence ; and as for the queen herself, De Croc, the ambassador, proposed to rid them of her altogether, and shut her up in a French convent.¹

It is probable that the Scottish secretary had not exaggerated these intentions of France, for we find that at this very time the greatest offers were made by the French king to secure the services of the Earl of Moray, then at his court.² These

¹ Robertson's Appendix, No. xxii., Throckmorton to Cecil, Fastcastle, 12th July 1567.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Norris to Elizabeth, Poissy, 2d July 1567. Same to Cecil, MS. Letter, Poissy, 2d July 1567. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Norris to Cecil Paris, 16th July 1567. ". . Great is the travel and pain that hath been here taken to win the Earl of Moray, offering both the Order, and great augmentation of living ; which, as he

splendid bribes he steadily rejected ; but on the other hand, he was so far from embracing the interests of Morton and his associates, that he despatched one of his servants, Nicholas Elphinston, on a mission to the Scottish queen, assuring her of his devotion to her service.

Elphinston arrived in London a few days after Throckmorton's departure for Scotland. He was there admitted to a secret interview with Elizabeth, which lasted for an hour, and his communication had the effect of rendering her more favourable to Mary, and more hostile to the confederate lords. There is a curious piece of secret history connected with the interview between this envoy of Moray and Elizabeth, which is to be found in a letter of Mr Heneage, a gentleman of the court, to Cecil. This person was in waiting in the antechamber of the palace, when Elizabeth, after dismissing Moray's messenger, called him hastily and sent him to Cecil. He was directed by her to inform the prime minister that Moray had despatched his servant with letters to the Queen of Scotland, expressive of his attachment, and offering his service ; that they were to be delivered to her own hands, and not to be seen by the confederates ; and that he had in charge also to remonstrate with them for their audacity in imprisoning their sovereign. But this was not all : the rest of the commission given by the English queen to Heneage, is still more interesting in furnishing us with an admission, from her own lips, of that insidious dealing which so often marked her policy.

Tell Cecil, said she, that he must instantly write a letter, in my name, to my sister, to which I will set my hand, for I cannot write it myself, as I have not " used her well and faithfully in these broken matters that be past. The purport of it must be, to let her know that the Earl of Moray never spoke defamedly of her for the death of her husband ; never plotted for the secret conveying

hath sent me word, he hath refused, lest, by taking gifts, he should be bound where he is now free."

of the prince to England; never confederated with the lords to depose her; on the contrary, now in my sister's misery let her learn from me the truth, and that is, that she has not a more faithful and honourable servant in Scotland."¹ At this date, therefore, (July 8,) if we are to believe this evidence, and there seems no good reason to question it, Moray was no party to the schemes of the confederates. On the contrary, he had declared himself against them, and was resolved to support and defend the queen his sovereign.

But to return to Throckmorton. This ambassador proceeded from Fastcastle to the capital, accompanied by Lord Hume and an escort of four hundred horse. The day after his arrival (July 13) there was a solemn fast held by the Reformed Church, the leaders of which were decided enemies of the Scottish queen; and his first impressions gave him little hope, either that he would be permitted to visit the royal captive, or be able to do her much good.² Nor did the confederate lords seem in any haste to have a conference with him; and when he accidentally met their leader Morton, he excused himself from entering upon business, as the day was devoted to sacred exercises Lethington, however, came to him in the evening, and from the tone of his conversation, it was apparent to the ambassador that they were determined he should not be allowed to see Mary. They had already, he said, refused the French ambassador, and in the present state of things, they did not choose to irritate France.

As to the probable fate of the unhappy prisoner, Throckmorton found all things looking gloomily. Her chief supporters, the party of the Hamiltons, were divided in their counsels, and almost equally treacherous in their intentions with her more open enemies.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr T. Heneage to Cecil, from the court, 8th July 1567.

² Throckmorton to the Queen, Edinburgh, 14th July 1567, Robertson, Appendix, No. xxii.

Being next heirs to the crown, it was generally believed that they would have been glad to have got rid both of Mary and the prince; and if we may credit Throckmorton, they only "made a show of the liberty of the queen, that they might induce these lords to destroy her, rather than they should recover her by violence out of their hands."³ Argyle was tampering with the Lords of the Secret Council. Herries, though more attached to her service, was not to be trusted when his own interests came in the way; the French king and the queen-mother were ready to desert her, if they could gain the confederates; and, singular as the fact may appear to those who have given credit to the attacks of his opponents, her only true friend, at this moment, was the Earl of Moray. He had despatched Elphinstone, as we have seen, to visit Mary and assure her of his services, and this envoy arrived in the capital much about the same time with Throckmorton. But when he requested to have access to the queen, and deliver his letters, he received a peremptory denial. It has been often asserted, and very commonly believed, that from the first rising of the lords against Mary and Bothwell, Moray was one of their party, in active correspondence with them; yet how are we to reconcile this with his present attachment to Mary's interests, his rejection of the offers of France, and the jealousy with which she was regarded by the confederates. But of all the enemies of the miserable queen, the most bitter were the Presbyterian clergy and the people. In the midst of their austerity and devotional exercises, the ministers expressed themselves with deep indignation against her, and looked forward with anxious interest to their great ecclesiastical council, which was to be held in eight days, and in which they had determined that the whole matter connected with the murder and her imprisonment should be debated.

³ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 18th July 1567. Also same to same, July 14, 1567. Both letters in Robertson's Appendix, No. xxii. And same to same, June 19, 1567, Caligula, C. i. fol. 18.

The more that Throckmorton investigated the state of parties during this interval, the more he became convinced of the hopelessness of his own interference, and the imminent peril of Mary. So far were the people from listening with any patience to the doctrines of passive obedience, which Elizabeth had instructed him to inculcate, that they took their stand on the very opposite ground—the responsibility of the prince, and the power of the nation to call their sovereign to account for any crimes she might have committed. “It is a public speech among all the people,” (so wrote the ambassador to Elizabeth,) “that their queen hath no more liberty nor privilege to commit murder nor adultery than any other private person, neither by God’s laws nor by the laws of the realm.”¹ These popular principles were now for the first time openly and powerfully preached to the commons. Knox, Craig, and the other ministers of the Reformed Church, considered the pulpit and the press as the lawful vehicles of their political as well as their religious opinions; and the celebrated Buchanan, who had joined the confederates, enforced the same doctrines with uncommon vigour and ability. Their arguments were grounded on the examples of wicked princes in the Old Testament who were deposed and put to death for their idolatry, and on alleged but disputable precedents in their own history of similar severity exercised by subjects against their sovereigns.² In consequence of all these efforts, the few friends who had at first ventured to defend the Scottish queen were silenced and intimidated, and the public mind became inflamed to such a state of madness and fury, that she began to think of saving her life by retiring to a nunnery in France, or living with the old Duchess of Guise.³

¹ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, July 18, 1567, Robertson, Appendix, No. xxii.

² Ibid.

³ State-paper Office, Throckmorton to the Queen, July 16, 1567. Printed by Laing, vol. ii. p. 122.

At this moment Robert Melvil was for the third time sent by the confederates to Lochleven, instructed to make a last effort to prevail upon his mistress to renounce Bothwell. By him Throckmorton found an opportunity to convey a letter, in which he strongly urged Mary to the same course.⁴ But the mission was completely unsuccessful: the queen, who believed herself to be with child, declared her firm resolution rather to die than desert her husband, and declare her child illegitimate. She requested Melvil, at the same time, to deliver a letter to the lords, which implored them to have consideration of her health, and to change the place of her imprisonment to Stirling, where she might have the comfort of seeing her son. She was willing, she said, to commit the government of the realm, either to the Earl of Moray alone, or to a council of the nobility; and proposed that, if they would not obey her as their queen, they should regard her with some favour as the mother of their prince, and the daughter of their king. To this interview between Mary and Melvil no one was admitted, and before he took his leave she produced a letter, requesting him to convey it to Bothwell. This he peremptorily refused, upon which she threw it angrily into the fire.⁵

On his return to the capital, he found the animosity against the queen at its height, and the English ambassador in despair of being able to restrain it from some fatal excess. Many openly declared that no power, either within or without the realm, should preserve her from that signal punishment which her notorious crimes deserved. Others, more moderate, proposed to restore her to the royal dignity, if she consented to divorce Bothwell; some advised that she should resign in favour of the prince, who might govern by a council, whilst she retired for life to France. This was Athole’s scheme, and not disliked by

⁴ Robert Melvil’s Declaration, Hopetoun MSS., Throckmorton to the Queen, July 18, 1567. Robertson, Appendix, No. xxii.

⁵ Melvil’s Declaration, Hopetoun MSS.

Morton; but to the majority of the privy-council it was unacceptable. They deemed it indispensable that Mary should be publicly arraigned and condemned to perpetual imprisonment as guilty of the king's murder, whilst some went so far as to insist that she should not only be condemned and degraded, but put to death.¹

When such was the state of public feeling, the General Assembly of the Church convened in Edinburgh.² The Protestant clergy had already entered into a strict coalition with Morton and the Lords of the Secret Council, who now held the whole power of the government; and the proceedings of their ecclesiastical tribunal partook of the rigorous and uncompromising character of Knox and Buchanan, its leaders. It was argued that the queen was guilty of crimes for which she ought to forfeit her life, and there seemed to be every probability that this dreadful result was about to take place, had it not been for the interference of Throckmorton, who, with the utmost earnestness, remonstrated against such an extremity.³ After violent debates, a more moderate course was adopted. Mary had (as we have seen) already intimated her readiness to resign the government to the Earl of Moray. It was now resolved to follow up the idea; and for this purpose Lord Lindsay, who had left Lochleven to attend the General Assembly, was despatched thither in company with Robert Melvil. From this nobleman, one of the fiercest zealots of his party, Mary had everything to dread: her passionate menace to him on the day she was taken prisoner at Carberry⁴ had not been forgotten, and he was now selected as a man whom she would hardly dare to resist. He carried with him three instruments drawn up by the lords in their sovereign's name. By the first she was made to demit the government of the realm in favour of her son,

¹ Caligula, C. i. fol. 18, MS. Letter, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, July 19, 1567.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Robert Melvil to Elizabeth, Edinburgh, July 29, 1567.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Supra, p. 257.

and to give orders for his immediate coronation; by the second, she, in consequence of his tender infancy, constituted her "dear brother," the Earl of Moray, regent of the realm; and by the third, she appointed the duke, with the Earls of Lennox, Argyll, Athole, Morton, Glencairn, and Mar, regents of the kingdom till the return of Moray from France, with power to continue in that high office, if he refused it.⁵

Before Lindsay was admitted, Melvil had a private interview with the queen, and assured her that her refusal to sign the papers would endanger her life. Nor was this going too far. It is certain that, had she proved obstinate, the lords were resolved to bring her to a public trial; that they spoke with the utmost confidence of her conviction for the king's murder, and affirmed that they possessed proof of her guilt in her own handwriting.⁶ These threats and assertions were in all probability communicated to his royal mistress by Melvil; and he insinuated that she ought to be the less scrupulous, as any deed signed in captivity, and under fear of her life, was invalid. He brought a message to the same purpose from Athole and Lethington, and a letter from Throckmorton.

It was a trying moment for Mary; and for a short time she resisted every entreaty, declaring passionately that she would sooner renounce her life than her crown; but when Lindsay was admitted, his stern demeanour at once terrified her into compliance. He laid the instruments before her; and with eyes filled with tears, and a trembling hand, she took the pen and signed the papers without even reading their contents.⁷ It was necessary, however, that they should pass the privy-seal; and here a new outrage was committed. The keeper, Thomas Sinclair, remonstrated, and declared that the queen being in ward, her resignation was ineffectual; Lindsay at-

⁵ Anderson, vol. ii. pp. 208-220, inclusive.

⁶ MS. Letter, Throckmorton to Cecil, 25th July 1567. Caligula, C. i. fol. 22.

⁷ Spottiswood, p. 211.

tacked his house, tore the seal from his hands, and compelled him by threats and violence to affix it to the resignation.¹

Having been so far successful, the lords hurried on the consummation of their plans, and resolved without delay to crown the prince, requesting Throckmorton's presence at the ceremony, and despatching Sir James Melvil to invite the Hamiltons. The English ambassador, however, gave a peremptory refusal. Their whole proceedings, he said, had been contrary to the advice, and in contempt of the remonstrances of his mistress.² The Hamiltons also declined; not, as they commissioned Melvil to inform the confederate lords, on the ground of their being enemies,—so far from this they thanked them for their gentle message,—but simply because, from the first, they had been made no party to their intentions. It was their wish also, they said, to present a protest, that this coronation should not be prejudicial to the title of the Duke of Chastelherault as next heir to the crown; and their request having been granted, they professed to offer no opposition.³

It was determined that the coronation should be held in the High Church at Stirling, and thither the confederate lords repaired; but on their arrival a collision took place between the new and old opinions. The clergy, of whom Knox was the great leader, insisted that the king should not be anointed, but simply crowned, anointing being a Jewish rite, and abrogated by the gospel dispensation. Against this notion it was argued that the custom was not a superstitious relic, but an ancient solemnity recognised by the general

usage of Christendom; and after a bitter contest, the objection was overruled, and the ceremonial proceeded, every endeavour having been made on the part of the lords to make it as solemn and magnificent as possible. In the procession Athole bore the crown, Morton the sceptre, and Glencairn the sword, whilst Mar, his governor, carried the infant prince in his arms into the church. The deeds of resignation by the queen were read; and Lindsay and Ruthven did not scruple to attest upon oath that which they knew to be false, that Mary's demission was her own free act. Knox then preached the sermon; the crown was placed on the king's head by the Bishop of Orkney; Morton, laying his hand on the Gospels, took the oaths on behalf of his sovereign, that he should maintain the reformed religion and extirpate heresy; the lords swore allegiance, placing their hands on his head; the burgesses followed; and, in conclusion, the Earl of Mar lifted the monarch from the throne and carried him back to his nursery in the castle.⁴ At night, in the capital, the blaze of bonfires, and universal mirth and dancing, attested the joy of the people.⁵

A more extraordinary revolution was perhaps never completed without bloodshed, and apparently with such disproportionate means. A small section of the nobles and the gentry, unsupported by foreign aid, with a handful of soldiers,⁶ at no time exceeding four hundred men, opposed by the highest of the aristocracy, and threatened with the hostility of England and France, were seen to rise with appalling suddenness and strength: they dispel their enemies; they imprison their sovereign; they hesitate whether she shall not be openly arraigned and executed; they compel her to resign her regal authority; and they now, finally, place the crown on the head of her son, an infant of a year old, and possess themselves of the

¹ We owe the discovery of this fact to Mr Riddell, in a paper published in *Blackwood's Magazine* for October 1817.

² Throckmorton to Elizabeth, Edinburgh, 26th July 1567. Stevenson's Selections, illustrating the reign of Mary, Queen of Scotland, p. 251. The Original is in the State-paper Office.

³ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, Edinburgh, 31st July 1567. Stevenson's Selections, p. 258.

⁴ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, Edinburgh, 31st July 1567, Stevenson, p. 257. Calderwood, MS. Hist., p. 684, Ayscough, 4735.

⁵ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, July 31, 1567.

⁶ By "soldiers," is here meant regular waged troops.

whole power of the government. If we look for the cause of this extraordinary success, it is to be traced chiefly, if not altogether, to the unhappy infatuation and imprudence of the queen. It was this that separated her friends, strengthened the hands of her enemies, gave ample field for the worst suspicions, and alienated from her the hearts and sympathy of the people. But to return.

The first intelligence of these events was received with the utmost indignation by Elizabeth. She had already instructed Throckmorton to remonstrate with the lords; she had warned him to beware of giving his presence or countenance to the coronation: she now interdicted him from holding any farther intercourse, as her ambassador, with men who had treated her with such courtesy and contempt, and declared "that she would make herself a party against them to the revenge of their sovereign, and an example to all posterity."¹

When her letters were delivered, the principal leaders, Morton, Mar, Glencairn, Hume, and Lethington, had come to Edinburgh, to await the arrival of Moray, to whom they had despatched an envoy, informing him of his having been chosen regent. Throckmorton, in obedience to his mistress's commands, kept aloof; but Tullibardine, the comptroller, and brother-in-law to the Earl of Mar, one of the *interim* regents, volunteered a visit; and, in the course of conversation on the late events, unveiled a scene of treachery upon the part of the Hamiltons, who had hitherto supported the queen, which filled him with horror. The two great leaders of this party were the Archbishop of St Andrews and the Abbot of Kilwinning; and when the English ambassador remonstrated upon the violence of the recent proceedings, and threatened the Lords of the Secret Council with hostility upon the part of Elizabeth, he was solemnly assured that a perseverance in such a course was the certain

way to shorten Mary's life. "Within the last forty-eight hours," said the comptroller, "the Archbishop of St Andrews, on the part of the Hamiltons, has proposed to us to put the queen to death. They have recommended this course as the only certain method of reconciling all parties; and on our consenting to adopt it, they are ready to join us to a man, and to bring Argyle and Huntly along with them."

Throckmorton at first expressed his utter disbelief that any men, who had hitherto borne a fair character, could be guilty of such atrocious and cold-blooded treachery. He argued also on the point of expediency, that more profit might be made of the queen's life than of her death. She might be divorced from Bothwell and afterwards marry a son of the Duke's, or a brother of Argyle's. To this Tullibardine's answer was remarkable. "My lord ambassador," said he, "these matters you speak of have been in question amongst them, but now they see not so good an *outgait*² by any of those devices as by the queen's death. For she being taken away, they account but the little king betwixt them and home,³ who may die. They love not the queen, and they know she hath no great fancy to any of them; and they fear her the more, because she is young and may have many children, which is the thing they would be rid of."⁴ Throckmorton, however, persevered in his incredulity, and that same evening the Secretary Lethington held a secret conference with him, in which he assured him that Tullibardine had stated nothing but the truth. I think it right, as these are new facts in this part of our history, involving a charge of unwonted perfidy even in this age, to give the particulars of this extraordinary conversation in the words of the ambassador to Elizabeth. "The same day," said he, (he is describing the

² Outgait—outlet.

³ The Hamiltons were nearest heirs to the crown, failing Mary and her son. Home here means the succession to the throne.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, Edinburgh, 9th August 1567.

¹ Orig. Draft, State-paper Office, Instructions to Sir N. Throckmorton, 27th July 1567. It is corrected in Cecil's hand.

events of the 7th of August,) “the Lord of Lethington came to visit me on behalf of all the lords. He demanded of me when I heard from your majesty, and what was the matter why I had sent to Stirling for audience. . . . I answered, to let the lords and him understand what your majesty did think of their rash proceedings, finding the matter very strange in this hasty sort to proceed with a queen, their sovereign, being a prince anointed, not having imparted their intent to your majesty. . . .

“For answer, the Laird of Lethington said, ‘My Lord Ambassador, these lords did think their cause could suffer no delays; and as for imparting their purposes to the queen’s majesty your sovereign, they doubted that neither she would allow that which was meet for them to do, neither could take any of their doings in good part. And where you have charged us with deprivation of the queen from her royal estate, it doth appear by such instruments as I sent you from Stirling, that we have not denuded the queen of her regality, but she hath voluntarily relinquished the same to her son.’ I asked him,” continued Throckmorton, “what freewill there might be, or uncompulsory consent, for a prisoner, and such a one as every day looked for to lose her life? ‘Yea,’ said he, ‘it is you that seek to bring it to pass, what show soever the queen your mistress, or you, do make to save her life, or set her at liberty. For the Hamiltons and you concur together; you have nothing in your mouths but liberty, and nothing less in your hearts. My Lord Ambassador,’ (he continued,) ‘I have heard what you have said unto me; I assure you, if you should use this speech unto them, which you do unto me, all the world could not save the queen’s life three days to an end; and as the case now standeth, it will be much ado to save her life.’

“I said, ‘My Lord of Lethington, if you remember, I told you, at my first coming hither, when I understood you minded the coronation of her son, that when you had touched her dignity, you would touch her life shortly

after.’ . . . ‘Well, my lord,’ said he, ‘I trust you do not take me to be one that doth thirst my sovereign’s blood, or that would stain my conscience with the shedding of the same? You know how I have proceeded with you since your coming hither. I have given you the best advice I could to prevent extremity; and either the queen your sovereign will not be advised, or you do forbear to advise her. I say unto you, as I am a Christian man, if we which have dealt in this action would consent to take the queen’s life from her, all the lords which hold out and lie aloof from us, would come and conjoin with us within these two days. This morning the Bishop of St Andrews and the Abbot of Kilwinning have sent a gentleman unto us for that purpose. And likewise the Earl of Huntly hath sent Duncan Forbes, within this hour, to conclude with us upon the same ground: and, to be plain with you, there be very few amongst ourselves which be of any other opinion.’”

Throckmorton then began to use persuasions to dissuade them from such a fearful extremity. Upon which Lethington assured him that, as far as he himself was concerned, there needed no argument—but he added, emphatically, “How can you satisfy men that the queen shall not become a dangerous party against them in case she live and come to liberty?” I said, ‘Divorce her from Bothwell.’ He said, ‘We cannot bring it to pass; she will in nowise hear of the matter.’ The conversation was then broken off by Sir James Balfour coming in to carry Lethington to the council, who were waiting for him.¹

It is clear, then, that at this moment the Hamiltons, instead of being friends to the unhappy queen, as they are represented in our popular historians, were acting towards her with treachery and cruelty; they were ready to sacrifice her to their own dreams of ambition,² and the life of

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 9th August 1567.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Leicester, Edinburgh, 9th August 1567.

Mary was in the most imminent peril.¹ The remonstrances and arguments of Throckmorton, however, so far prevailed, that it was agreed the fatal blow should be suspended till the arrival of the Earl of Moray.

To this remarkable man, on whose movements so much depended, all eyes were now turned, and his future conduct became the subject of much discussion. He had been elected regent. Would he accept this high office, which, considering the divided state of parties, brought with it so many difficulties? What were his sentiments as to the extraordinary events which had lately taken place? The deposition and captivity of his sovereign, the coronation of the prince, the remonstrances of England, the efforts of France, above all, the guilt and punishment of the queen, now so strongly urged by that party of the Reformed Church with whom he had hitherto acted? All this was field for fearful conjecture to some—for anxious speculation to all; and Moray's was a character not easily fathomed, which often concealed purposes of great weight and determination under a blunt and open manner. He had now been absent from Scotland for nearly four months, and it is certain that, when Morton and the Lords of the Secret Council first planned that revolution, (14th May,) which ended so fatally to Mary, they had secretly communicated with him. The exact nature of that communication we know not, but it was reported that he approved of their designs; and a month later, after the imprisonment of the queen, they again entered into correspondence with him; once more, about a fortnight later; and once again, after the resignation of the queen, this correspondence was renewed. These facts are undoubtedly

calculated to excite suspicion; and we are not to be surprised if, in the heat of the controversy which has agitated this portion of our history, it has been argued from them that Moray not only approved of, but directed all the plans of the conspirators. But the inquirer after truth dares not advance so rapidly. All that is proved amounts to the fact, that the lords of the confederacy against Mary, from the first, were anxious to gain him. Indeed, his election to the regency shewed how far they were ready to go to secure him: but of his answers to their letters we know nothing. It is also worthy of remark, that on the only occasion when we can detect a message sent to them by Moray, it was hostile to his reputed friends. Elphinstone, whom we have seen deputed by him to communicate with his imprisoned mistress and her captors, brought an assurance of such comfort and loyalty to Mary, and so severe a remonstrance to the lords, that they interdicted him from seeing the queen until they had made up their minds to depose her or to put her to death. Such a message could not have proceeded from associates.

On being informed of his election to the regency, Moray prepared to leave France, and his intentions at this moment formed an object of the deepest interest to the court of England and the Tuilleries. Elizabeth was naturally anxious to preserve the influence she had hitherto exerted in the affairs of Scotland. She considered her hold over the measures of that country as an essential part of the great system for the support of Protestantism in Europe. At the same time, however, she was highly incensed at the Lords of the Secret Council for their deposition of their sovereign: their conduct, in her opinion, was insulting to the majesty of the crown, and destructive of all principles of good government; and as she had determined to exert herself to procure the liberty of the captive queen, she was anxious to secure Moray in the same service. Such were the feelings of Elizabeth.

¹ Keith, p. 436, has fallen into the error of representing the band or agreement of the party of the Hamiltons at Dumbarton, as having been entered into about the 29th July, instead of the 29th June, which is its true date, as seen on the original instrument in the State-paper Office. In Mr Dawson Turner's volume of MS. Scottish letters, there is a copy of the same deed, with the correct date, 29th June.

The court of France, on the other hand, was equally anxious to preserve, or rather to recover, the influence it once held over Scotland; and at first the king declared that he would strain every effort to have Mary and the prince brought into his kingdom: but this idea was soon abandoned. The Scottish queen had never been a favourite with Catherine of Medicis; and provided they gained the confederate lords, in whose hands at this moment was the whole power of the government, and enlisted Moray in their interest, the French soon came to care little whether the queen remained a captive or was set at liberty. High bribes were offered him before his departure, and when he resisted these entreaties, and it began to be rumoured that he leant to the side of England, every impediment was thrown in the way of his return.¹ But such difficulties were overcome by his prudence and firmness. Without binding himself to France in any specific agreement, he assured the king of his desire to use every exertion for the deliverance of his sovereign; and left the court with Monsieur de Lignerolles, who was ordered to accompany him. Of this person the avowed object was to carry a message from the French king to the Lords of the Secret Council; but his real errand was to watch the proceedings of the regent-elect, and hurry him on to Scotland, without giving him time to communicate with Elizabeth.²

At this moment, when on the eve of leaving France, Moray was informed, probably by Elphinston, his own servant, of the alleged proofs of Mary's guilt, which had been discovered by her enemies in Scotland; his informant stating that he had

seen and read a letter of the Scottish queen to Bothwell, which proved that she was privy to her husband's murder.³ Hitherto the accusations against his sovereign had been vague and unsupported by proof; but if this were true, and if she still obstinately refused to renounce Bothwell, it appeared clear to him that her immediate restoration to liberty was impossible. At the same time, this intelligence necessarily worked a change in Moray's feelings more favourable to the confederate lords, and more severe towards his sovereign; so that, on his arrival at the English court, his interview with the queen was angry and unsatisfactory: Elizabeth expressed herself determined to restore the imprisoned queen, and to punish the audacious subjects who had dethroned her. Against this dictatorial tone, Moray's spirit rose, and the queen, who expected implicit obedience, upbraided him with such severity, that she shook his affection towards England, a result much deplored by Bedford and Throckmorton. These able persons, and her chief minister Cecil, who were intimately acquainted with the state of the two parties, had earnestly enforced on the queen the necessity of leaving Mary to her fate, and encouraging the lords who had deposed her: they considered her cause to be desperate; and they believed such a course to be the only likely way to prevent these men from throwing themselves into the arms of the French king, who had made them flattering advances, and was ready to desert the Scottish queen. It was to the honour of Elizabeth that she repudiated this advice, refused to abandon the cause of the captive princess, and perceiving the change in Moray's mind, dismissed him with no kindly feeling.⁴

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Norris to Cecil, Poissy, 2d July 1567, French Correspondence. MS. Letter, original, State-paper Office, Norris to Cecil, July 16, 1567, French Correspondence. Also Norris to Elizabeth, July 23, 1567. Stevenson's Selections, p. 243.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Norris to Cecil, Paris, July 16, 1567.

³ Gonzalez Apuntamientos, p. 323. From a letter of Norris to Cecil, MS. State-paper Office, 23d July 1567, French Correspondence, it appears that Moray left the French court at that time. Also Throckmorton to Cecil, August 2, 1567. Stevenson's Selections, p. 263.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, 10th August 1567. Also

On the 8th of August he reached Berwick, accompanied by De Lignerolles. Here he was the guest of Bedford, his ancient friend and associate; and was met by two envoys from the lords of the confederacy, Sir James Makgill, lord clerk-register, and the well-known Sir James Melvil: the first was the representative of that section who were most determined against the queen; the other was deputed by that more moderate class who wished to spare her life, and contemplated the possibility of her restitution. Both of these were fully able to inform him of the state of parties; and Makgill, who had been a principal actor in the deposition of his sovereign, and knew all that could be urged against her, explained to him their whole proceedings, and urged the absolute necessity of his accepting the regency. Moray, however, refused to commit himself; and, pursuing his journey, was met at the Bound Rode, the line which separates the two countries, by a troop of four hundred noblemen and gentlemen who had assembled to honour his arrival. From thence he rode to Whittingham.

It was only a year and a half before, that in this fatal house the conference had been held between Lethington, Bothwell, and Morton, in which the king's murder was determined. Bothwell was now a fugitive and an outlaw; but his associates in guilt, the same Lethington and Morton, now received Moray at Whittingham, and cordially sympathised with him, when he expressed his horror for the crime, and his resolution to avenge it.

After a night's rest, the regent-elect proceeded to the capital, which he entered next day, surrounded by the nobility, and amid the acclamations of the citizens. Here for two days he employed himself unremittingly in examining the state of the two factions, holding consultations with his friends, and acquiring the best information as to the difficulties he might have to en-

counter in accepting the high office which was offered him. He had already held an interview with Throckmorton, the English ambassador, who met him for this purpose a few miles from Edinburgh; and to this able judge, who had no interest to blind him, Moray appeared to be acting with sincerity and honour. He was already aware of the general nature of De Lignerolles' message to the lords of the confederacy; and in the secret consultations which he held with these persons, the whole history of their proceedings must have been laid before him. From them he now learnt the full extent of Mary's infatuation and alleged guilt; the proofs and letters which, as they asserted, convicted her of participation in her husband's murder, were now, no doubt, imparted to him; and he was made aware of the stern determination which many of them had embraced, of bringing her to a public trial, and, if convicted, putting her to death. As to the difficulties of his situation, the faction of the Hamiltons and the hostility of Elizabeth were the principal obstacles in his way; but the first were divided in their counsels, and the English queen would soon, he trusted, be induced by Cecil to remove her opposition. On the whole, he felt almost resolved to accept the regency, but one point made him still hesitate. The demission of the crown, the deeds which nominated himself, and sanctioned the coronation of the prince, were said to have been extorted from Mary. If true, this would vitiate his title to the office, and he requested permission to see the queen in Lochleven before he gave his final answer. This demand startled the lords, and some thought it would be injudicious to grant it. To Throckmorton, the English ambassador, he had expressed himself with great commiseration towards the captive princess, and they dreaded the consequences of his pity or sympathy.

At last, however, they consented, and, on the 15th of August, Moray, in company with Morton, Athole, and Lord Lindsay, visited the queen in her prison. It was a remarkable and

13th August 1567, B.C., Bedford to Cecil.
Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C.,
1st August 1567, Bedford to Cecil.

affecting interview. Mary received them with tears, and passionately complained of her wrongs. Then taking Moray aside, before supper, she eagerly questioned him as to the intentions of the lords, and in vain endeavoured to fathom his own. Contrary to his usual open and frank demeanour, he was gloomy, silent, and reserved. When the bitter meal had past, she again spoke to him in private; and, torn by fear and suspense, pathetically described her sufferings. He was her brother, she said, her only friend, he must know her fate, for he was all-powerful with her enemies; would he now withhold his counsel and assistance in this extremity of her sorrow? What was she to look for? She knew some thirsted for her blood. In the end, she implored him to keep her no longer in doubt, but to speak out; and, even were it to criminate her, to use all freedom and plainness.¹

Thus urged, Moray, without mitigation or disguise, laid before her the whole history of her misgovernment; using a severity of language, and earnestness of rebuke, more suited (to use a phrase of Throckmorton's) to a ghostly confessor than a counsellor: her ill-advised marriage with Darnley, her hasty love, her sudden estrangement, the dark scene of his murder, the manifest guilt of Bothwell, his pretended trial, his unjust acquittal, her infatuated passion, her shameless marriage, her obstinate adherence to the murderer, the hatred of her subjects, her capture, her imprisonment, the allegations of the lords that they could convict her by her own letters of being accessory to the murder, their determination to bring her to a public trial, and to put her to an ignominious death; all these points were insisted on, with a severity and plainness to which the queen had seldom been accustomed, and the dreadful picture plunged the unhappy sufferer into an agony of despair. Throughout the dismal recital, she interrupted him by extenuations, apologies, confessions, and sometimes by denials. The con-

versation had been prolonged till past midnight; and Mary, weeping and clinging to the hope of life, again and again implored her brother's protection: but Moray was unmoved, or, at least, he judged it best to seem so, and retired to his chamber, bidding her seek her chief refuge in the mercy of God.²

Next morning, at an early hour, she sent for him, and perceiving the impression he had made, he assumed a milder mood, threw in some words of consolation, and assured her that, whatever might be the conduct of others, to save her life he was ready to sacrifice his own; but, unfortunately, the decision lay not with him alone, but with the lords, the Church, and the people. Much also depended on herself; if she attempted an escape, intrigued to bring in the French or the English, and thus disturbed the quiet government of her son, or continued in her inordinate affection to Bothwell, she need not expect to live; if she deplored her past sins, shewed an abhorrence for the murder of her husband, and repented her former life with Bothwell, then might he hold out great hope that those in whose power she now lay would spare her life. As to her liberty he said, in conclusion, that was at present out of the question. He had, as yet, only a single voice in the state, like other nobles; it was therefore not in his power to procure it, nor would it be for her interest at this moment to desire it. It was Mary's weakness (in the present case we can hardly call it such) to be hurried away by impulses. She had passed the night under the dreadful conviction that her fate was decided, that she had but a short time to live. She now discerned a gleam of hope, and, starting from her seat, took Moray in her arms, and urged him to accept the regency, as the best and safest course for herself, her son, and her kingdom. He declined it, she again pressed it on him; he gave his reasons against undertaking so arduous a task. She replied, and insisted, that the ser-

¹ Throckmorton to the Queen, August 20, 1567. Keith, p. 444.

² Throckmorton to the Queen, August 20, 1567. Keith, p. 444.

vice of his sovereign and his country ought to outweigh every selfish motive. He at last assented; the queen then suggested that his first efforts should be directed to get all the forts into his hands, and requested him to take her jewels and other articles of value, into his custody, as her only way of preserving them. On taking leave, she embraced and kissed him with tears, and sent by him her blessing to her son. Moray then turned to Lindsay, Ruthven, and Lochleven, and recommending them to treat their royal mistress with all gentleness, left the castle.¹

Having thus effected his purpose, with much address and some little duplicity, Moray and his companions repaired to Stirling to visit the prince. Here they remained until the evening of the 19th of August, when they returned to the capital; and, on the 22d, he was solemnly declared regent. The ceremony of his inauguration was held in the council-chamber within the Tolbooth, where, in presence of the Lords of the Secret Council, the

nobility, spirituality, and commissioners of burghs, the instruments granted by the queen were publicly read. After this, the earl delivered an oration, in which he alluded to his own unfitness for so high an office, accepted the charge, and took the oath with his hand upon the Gospels. He swore that, to the utmost of his power, he would serve God, according to His holy Word revealed in the New and Old Testament; that he would maintain the true religion as it was then received within that realm; that he would govern the people according to the ancient and lovable laws of the kingdom; procure peace, repress all wrong, maintain justice and equity, and root out from the realm all heretics and enemies to the true Church of God.² He was then proclaimed, amid universal acclamations, at the cross of Edinburgh, and throughout all the counties and burghs of the kingdom. Information of this event was instantly sent to the Earl of Bedford at Berwick, who next day communicated it to Cecil.³

CHAPTER IX.

REGENCY OF THE EARL OF MORAY.

1567—1569.

IMMEDIATELY after his acceptance of the government, Moray invited Throckmorton to a conference. He obeyed, and found the regent and Secretary Lethington sitting together, upon which he conveyed to them "in as earnest and vehement a form as he could set it forth," the queen his mistress's severe disapproval of their recent conduct. To this remonstrance Maitland made a bold reply. Herenounced,

for himself and his colleagues, all intention of harm to the person and honour of his royal mistress in their late proceedings. "So far from it," said he, "Mr Ambassador, that we wish her to be queen of all the world; but now she is in the state of a person in the delirium of a fever, who refuses

² Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. pp. 232, 253.

³ Bedford to Cecil, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., August 23, 1567, Berwick. Also Throckmorton to Cecil, Aug. 23, 1567. Stevenson's Selections, p. 239.

¹ Throckmorton to the Queen, August 20, 1567. British Museum, Caligula, C. i. folio xxviii. Printed by Keith, p. 44.

everything which may do her good, and requires all that may work her harm. Be assured nothing will be more prejudicial to her interest, than for your mistress to precipitate matters. It may drive us to a strait, and compel us to measures we would gladly avoid. Hitherto have we been content to be charged with grievous and infamous titles; we have quietly suffered ourselves to be condemned as perfidious rebels and unnatural traitors, rather than proceed to anything that might touch our sovereign's honour. But beware, we beseech you, that your mistress, by her continual threats and defamations, by hostility, or by soliciting other princes to attack us, do not push us beyond endurance. Think not we will lose our lives, forfeit our lands, and be challenged as rebels throughout the world, when we have the means to justify ourselves. And if there be no remedy but your mistress will have war, sorry though we be, far rather will we take our fortune, than put our queen to liberty in her present mood, resolved as she is to retain and defend Bothwell, to hazard the life of her son, to peril the realm, and to overthrow her nobility."¹

"For your wars," he continued, "we know them well: you will burn our Borders, and we shall burn yours; if you invade us, we do not dread it, and are sure of France; for your practices to nourish dissension amongst us, we have an eye upon them all. The Hamiltons will take your money, laugh you to scorn, and side with us. At this moment we have the offer of an agreement with them in our hands. The queen, your mistress, declares she wishes not only for our sovereign's liberty, and her restoration to her dignity, but is equally zealous for the preservation of the king, the punishment of the murderer, and the safety of the lords. To accomplish the first, our queen's liberty, much has been done; for the rest, absolutely nothing. Why does not her majesty fit out some ships of war to apprehend Bothwell,

and pay a thousand soldiers to reduce the forts and protect the king? When this is in hand, we shall think her sincere; but for her charge to set our sovereign forthwith at liberty, and restore her to her dignity, it is enough to reply to such strange language, that we are the subjects of another prince, and know not the queen's majesty for our sovereign."²

As soon as Lethington had concluded, Throckmorton, turning to Moray, expressed a hope that such sentiments would at least not meet his approval. He was not "banded" with these lords, he had committed none of their excesses. But Moray was now secure: he had little to fear from Elizabeth, nothing from France, and his answer was as decided, though more laconic than the secretary's. "Truly, my lord Ambassador," said he, "methinks you have had reason at the Laird of Lethington's hands. It is true that I have not been at the past doings of these lords, yet I must commend what they have done; and seeing the queen my sovereign and they have laid on me the charge of the regency, a burden I would gladly have avoided, I am resolved to maintain their action, and will reduce all men to obedience in the king's name, or it shall cost me my life."³

The ambassador had been long aware that his further stay in Scotland would be totally useless. He had earnestly solicited his recall; and Elizabeth now agreed to it, but ordered him first to make a last remonstrance in favour of the captive queen, and to request to be admitted to her presence. This, as he had looked for, was peremptorily refused by Moray. They had excluded De Lignerolles, the French ambassador, he said, who had so lately left them; and it was impossible to admit him: for the rest of his message from the Queen of England, the regent, after his usual fashion, replied to it with great brevity: as to his acceptance of the government, the deed was

¹ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, August 22, 1567, printed by Keith, p. 448, from original, *Caligula*, C. i. fol. xxxii.

² *Ibid.*, *ut supra*.

done ; for calumny he cared little, and would use none other defence than a good conscience and a sincere intention ; to satisfy the queen that his mistress had consented, he could only say that he had her own word and signature ; for her liberty, its being granted depended upon accidents ; and as to her condition after Bothwell's apprehension, it would be idle, he said, to bargain for the bear's-skin before they had him. The ambassador, before he took his leave, was pressed to accept a present of plate in the name of the king. This was declined in strong terms, and on the 29th of August he left the capital for England.

Moray now addressed himself with characteristic decision and courage to the cares of government ; and, to use Throckmorton's expressive phrase, “went stoutly to work, resolved rather to imitate those who had led the people of Israel than any captains of that age.”¹ He instantly despatched the Laird of Grange and Murray of Tullibardine, with three armed ships, in pursuit of Bothwell, who, after lurking in the north, and in vain attempting to make a party in these remote districts, had fled to Orkney and turned pirate.² He next employed the most vigorous measures to compel the whole kingdom to acknowledge the king's government ; to secure himself against attack if Elizabeth should meditate it, and to keep up pacific relations with France, which, from the tone all along assumed by De Lignerolles, he was assured would not be difficult. The Hamiltons had made some feeble attempts to prevent the regent being proclaimed within their bounds ; but they acted with no fixed plan, had no leader of ability, and gave him little anxiety.³

A large proportion of the nobles who had hitherto been hostile or neu-

¹ Throckmorton to Cecil, August 20, 1567, in Stevenson's Selections, p. 282.

² Throckmorton to Cecil, August 26, 1567, Stevenson's Selections, p. 294. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, Berwick, September 11, 1567.

³ Throckmorton to the Queen, Aug. 23, 1567, Stevenson's Selections, p. 291.

tral now sent in their adherence to his government ; and Sir James Balfour, the governor of the castle of Edinburgh, delivered that fortress into his hands. This infamous man was the intimate friend of Bothwell, and a principal actor in the king's murder. It might have been expected that Moray, who had lately expressed so much horror for that deed, and so determined a resolution to avenge it, would have been the last to overlook the crime in one of the principal conspirators ; but, like other ambitious men, he could make his conscience give way to his interest, as the treaty in question completely proved. Its first stipulation was, that Balfour should have an ample remission as an accomplice in the murder ; the next, that before he gave up the keys of the castle, five thousand pounds should be paid down ; the last, that he himself should have the Priory of Pittenweem, and his son an annuity. All this was agreed to, apparently without difficulty, and only two days after his assuming the regency, Moray in person took possession of the castle.⁴

As if to cover the shame of this transaction, the regent made unusual exertions to seize some of the inferior delinquents. Previous to his arrival in Scotland, Captain Blacater had been taken and executed : he now apprehended John Hay of Tallo, a page of the king's called Durham, black John Spens, John Blacater, and James Edmonson.⁵ The guilt of Tallo, as a principal agent in the murder, was completely proved, but his examination threw Moray into great perplexity, for, to use Bedford's words to Cecil, he not only “opened the whole device of the murder,” but “declared who were the executioners of the same, and went so far as to touch a great many, not of the smallest.”⁶ We have already seen that Lethington, Morton,

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Cecil, August 26, 1567. History of James the Sixth, p. 18.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, September 5, 1567. And same to same, September 11, 1567.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, September 16, 1567.

and Argyle, three of the most powerful men in Scotland, were either accomplices in the assassination, or consenting to its perpetration; and there can be no doubt that they, amongst others, were implicated in Tallo's confession. But in what manner was Moray to proceed? It was these very men who had placed him in the regency; with them he now acted familiarly and confidentially: their cause could not with safety be separated from his own. He might indeed attempt to seize and punish them, but such was their strength, that it would be at the risk of being plucked down from his high office by the same hands which had built him up. The truth, however, probably was, that Moray had been long aware of the true character of the persons by whose successful guilt he now profited, and had determined to favour the higher culprits, whilst he let loose the vengeance of the law upon the lesser delinquents. He could not prevent the people, however, and all the more honest part of the nation, from arraigning such interested conduct; but he little heeded these murmurs; and for the present Hay's examination was suppressed, and his trial indefinitely postponed: Durham, the king's page, also was kept in prison in irons.¹

The regent now summoned the castle of Dunbar, which was still held for Bothwell by one of his retainers. Its governor affected to resist, but Moray bombarded it in person, and in a few days the garrison capitulated. A last effort of the Hamiltons to get up a resistance was only made to be abandoned; Argyle, who had encouraged it, submitted, bringing with him Boyd, Livingston, and the Abbot of Kilwinning. This last person was deputed by the Archbishop of St Andrews, the leader of the Hamiltons, to make his peace; Huntly and Herries, much about the same time, gave in their adherence to the king's government; and the regent, on the 15th of September, informed his

friend Cecil that the whole realm was quiet.²

In the midst of these transactions, Grange returned unsuccessful from his pursuit of Bothwell. He had boasted to Bedford that he would either bring back the murderer or lose his life in the attempt; but, in giving chase, Grange's ship, one of the largest in the Scottish navy, struck upon a sand-bank, and although he boarded and brought home with him one of Bothwell's vessels, the Earl himself, in a lighter craft, escaped to Norway. In one respect the expedition was important, as Hepburn of Bolton, an accomplice in the king's murder, was seized in the ship, and, by his confession, threw additional light on that dark transaction. For the present, however, his revelations were not suffered to be known.³

Moray now summoned a parliament, (December 15,) the proceedings of which evince the new regent's complete connexion and sympathy with the party of the Reformed Church, and demand especial attention. It has been asserted that it was thinly attended, but the remark can only apply to the bishops, who represented the ecclesiastical estate, of whom but four appeared, Moray, Galloway, Orkney, and Brechin. There were present, however, fourteen abbots, twelve earls, sixteen lords and masters, the name given to lords' eldest sons, and twenty-seven commissioners of burghs.⁴ The discussions were opened in a speech by Lethington, of which a copy still remains in his own handwriting, and it were to be wished that its truth and sincerity had been equal to its talent. He alluded to the vast importance of the crisis in which they

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, 16th September 1567. MS. Ibid., proceedings of the Hamiltons, 17th September 1567. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, 15th September 1567.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 11th September 1567, Moray to Cecil. Also Melville's Memoirs, p. 186. Also 16th September, MS. Letter, B.C., Bedford to Cecil.

⁴ Anderson, vol. ii. pp. 228-230. Also MS., State-paper Office, December 15, 1567.

met, and the subjects upon which they were about to legislate, any one of which would, he said, have been enough to have occupied a parliament. These were, the establishing a uniform religion; the acknowledgment of the just authority of the king in consequence of the queen's free demission of the crown in his favour; the sanction to be given to the appointment of a regent chosen to act in the king's minority; the reuniting the minds of the nobility; the punishment of the cruel murder of the late king, their sovereign's father; and many other disorders requiring the grave consideration of their lordships. Upon these heads, he said, he would not dilate, but two points he must not omit, both tending to their great comfort, and calling for deep gratitude. The first was, the success which, in matters of religion, had followed such comparatively small beginnings; the second, their happy fortune in having in the regent a nobleman so excellently qualified to carry their ordinances into execution, whether they related to the Church or the commonwealth. "As to religion," said he, "the quietness you presently enjoy, declares sufficiently the victory that God by His Word has obtained among you, within the space of eight or nine years; how feeble the foundation was in the eyes of men, how unlikely it was to rise so suddenly to so large and huge a greatness, with what calmness the work has proceeded, not one of you is ignorant. Iron has not been heard within the house of the Lord, that is to say, the whole has been builded, set up, and erected to this greatness, without bloodshed. Note it, I pray you, as a singular testimony of God's favour, and a peculiar benefit granted only to the realm of Scotland, not as the most worthy, but chosen out by His providence from among all nations, for causes hid and unknown to us, and to foreshew His almighty power, that the true religion has obtained a free course universally throughout the whole realm, and yet not a Scotchman's blood shed in the forthsetting of the whole quarrel. With what na-

tion in the earth has God dealt so mercifully? Consider the progress of religion from time to time in other countries—Germany, Denmark, England, France, Flanders, or where you please: you shall find the lives of many thousands spent before they could purchase the tenth part of that liberty whereunto we have attained, as it were sleeping upon down beds."¹

When we recollect the events of the few last years,—the rising of Moray against the queen's marriage, the murder of Riccio, the flight of Morton, the assassination of Darnley, the confederacy against Bothwell, and the imprisonment of the queen, all of them events more or less connected with the establishment of the Reformation in Scotland,—and remember also that Lethington was deeply engaged in them all, it is certainly difficult which most to condemn—the gross inaccuracy of this picture, or the hardihood evinced by its coming from his lips.

But to return to the proceedings of the parliament. The committee of the Lords of the Articles having been chosen,² the three estates sanctioned the queen's demission of the crown, the king's coronation, and the appointment of Moray to the regency. The Pope's authority was next abolished, the Act to that effect passed in the disputed parliament of 1560, being solemnly ratified. All laws repugnant to the Word of God were annulled; and the "Confession of Faith," which had been already read and approved of in a former parliament, was sanctioned and published. All heretics and hearers of mass were made liable to punishment, confiscation of movables being declared the penalty for the first offence, banishment for the

¹ MS. State-papér Office. An Oration of the Lord of Lethington, at the Parliament of Scotland, December 1567, in Lethington's own hand.

² It was composed of the Bishops of Moray, Galloway, and Orkney; the Abbots of Dunfermline, Melrose, Newbottle, Balmerino, St Colm's Inch, Pittenweem, and Portmoak, the Earls of Huntly, Argyle, Morton, Athole, Glencairn, Mar, and Caithness; the Lords Hume, Lindsay, and Sempill; with the Provosts of Edinburgh, Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, St Andrews, Cupar, Stirling, and Ayr.

second, and death for the third. Such persons as opposed the "Confession of Faith," or refused to receive the sacraments after the Presbyterian form, were declared to be no members of the Church of Christ. The examination and admission of ministers was declared a prerogative inherent in the Church, but to lay patrons was continued the power of presentation, with an appeal to the General Assembly, if their nomination of a qualified person was not sustained by the superintendents and ministers; and, lastly, all kings, at their coronation, or princes, or magistrates acting in their place, were bound to take the oath for the support of the true Church and the extirpation of heresy.¹

So far everything succeeded to the wishes of the reformed clergy; but their endeavour to repossess themselves of the patrimony of the Church was not so fortunate. They pleaded a former promise to this effect, and, if we may credit Bishop Spottiswood, the regent shewed an anxiety to fulfil it; but the laymen, who had violently seized the property of the Church when it was in the hands of the Roman Catholic clergy, manifested the same violence now that their own ministers proposed to resume possession, and, with difficulty, consented to restore to them a third of the benefices.² It was next ordered that a reformation should be made in all schools, colleges, and universities, and that no teachers were to be admitted but such as had been examined and approved by the appointed visitors and superintendents; and lastly, that, as far as concerned the preaching of the Word, the reformation of manners, and the administration of the sacraments, no other ecclesiastical powers should be acknowledged than those which were now claimed by the Presbyterian Church, to which they gave the title of the Immaculate Spouse of Christ.³

A keen debate arose when the subject of the queen's imprisonment came

before the Assembly, which was greatly divided in opinion. Many, who were convinced of their sovereign's guilt, and who had adopted the views lately promulgated by the ministers in their pulpit addresses, contended that she should be brought to a public trial, and, if the crime was proved, punished by the laws like any other subject of the realm. To this it was objected that the monarch was the source of all authority; that she could not, without absurdity and contradiction, be made amenable to an inferior jurisdiction, but was accountable for her conduct to God alone. It was replied, that extraordinary crimes required extraordinary remedies; but this doctrine was not generally acceptable. The discussion concluded in a resolution that the imprisonment of the queen should be continued, and an act of parliament passed for the exoneration of those noblemen and barons who had risen in arms for the prosecution of the murder. The terms of this act, which were nearly similar to a previous resolution of the Privy-council, require a moment's notice, as it is in it that we find the first public mention of those letters of Mary to Bothwell, which, it was afterwards contended, completely proved her guilt. It declared the conduct and transactions of these lords, from the 10th of February (the day of Darnley's murder) till the present time, to be lawful and loyal; that they should never be subjected to any prosecution for what they had done, because, if the queen were confined, it was solely in consequence of her own fault and demerit, seeing that, by several of her private letters, written wholly with her own hand, and sent by her to Bothwell, and by her ungodly and pretended marriage with him, it was most certain that she was cognisant, art and part, of the murder of the king her husband. This declaration of the estates having been signed and sealed, and ordered to be printed along with the other statutes, the parliament was dissolved.⁴

¹ Spottiswood, p. 214. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 1006. Black Acts, fol. 1-5. c. 1, 2.

² Maitland, vol. ii. p. 1007.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 62, 69. The words in the Black Acts. Anderson, vol. ii. p. 221.

It appears, by an act of Privy-council, dated the 16th September 1568, that the Earl of Morton had, at that time,¹ delivered to the regent the little box or coffer, with the letters and sonnets which it contained. It was to these letters that the act now quoted referred; and the partial and unjust conduct of Moray and the parliament need hardly be pointed out. Such documents might or might not be originals; but by every principle of justice the queen ought not to have been condemned, nor should these letters have been received as evidence of the justice of that condemnation, until she had enjoyed in person, or by her counsel, an opportunity of examining the proofs produced against her. This injustice, however, was little in comparison with another proceeding of Moray's, who, having now tasted the sweets of absolute power, and being determined at all hazard to retain it, became little scrupulous of the means which he employed. Sir James Balfour, as we have seen, had been the confidant of Bothwell, and was the depositary of the bond or contract which was drawn up for the murder of the king. It had been seen by one of the accomplices in the murder, named Ormiston, who affirmed that Bothwell pointed out certain signatures, which he declared to be those of Argyle, Huntly, Lethington, and Balfour himself.² This profligate adherent of Bothwell's kept the bond, along with the queen's jewels and other property of value, in the castle of Edinburgh, which fortress the Duke of Orkney had committed to his charge; but he betrayed the place, as we have seen, to Moray; and, on its delivery, the regent, now all-powerful, might have stipulated for the delivery of all the evidence which threw light upon so foul a plot. In estimating his moral character, which has been highly extolled by some writers, it is instructive

are, "divers her privie letters written halelie [wholly] with her own hand." The words of the act of Privy-council are, "divers her privie letters, written and subscribed with her own hand."

¹ Anderson, vol. II. p. 257.

² Supra, p. 54.

to mark in what way he appears to have proceeded. The letters alleged to be written by the queen were preserved, exhibited to the council, and quoted to the parliament as proofs of her guilt. Her jewels and other apparel were delivered up by Balfour³ to Moray, but the "bond" which connected his friends with the murder was appropriated by Lethington, committed to the flames, and destroyed for ever. We learn this important fact, which is new in the controversy, from a letter addressed by Drury to Cecil, on the 28th of November, a short time before the meeting of the parliament. "The writings," said he, "which did comprehend the names and consents of the chief for the murdering of the king is turned into ashes, the same not unknown to the queen; and the same that concerns her part kept to be shewn, which offends her." It is true there is here no assertion that the regent himself threw the bond into the fire, and it was Lethington's and Balfour's interest, as it criminated themselves, to have it destroyed; but that Moray consented to its destruction, whilst he preserved the evidence against the queen, the whole circumstances appear to me to demonstrate. Drury, in the same letter to Cecil, observed, "that Moray made fair weather with Mary, and was dealing very soundly and uprightly." Sir William's ideas as to upright conduct, unless the expression was used solely with reference to the safety assured by the regent to his own associates, must have been peculiar.

Of this partial dealing he now gave another signal instance in the trial of those delinquents who were in custody for the king's murder. Their names were Hay of Tallo, John Hepburn of Bolton, George Dalgleish, a page or chamberlain, and William Powrie, a servant of Bothwell's. It was well known at the time of his being appre-

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, Berwick, 5th September 1567. Ibid. same to same, 11th September 1567. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, October 15, 1570, and MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, November 28, 1587.

hended that Hay, the confidant of Bothwell, had not only given a full detail of the murder, but had accused some of the highest nobility of being accomplices in it.¹ It was equally notorious that Captain Cullen, who had been employed in his most secret concerns by the chief murderer, had revealed the whole circumstances,² and that the lords and the regent must have been in possession of his confession. So general was the expectation of these disclosures being made public, that Sir William Drury, in writing to Cecil upon the subject, informed him that Tallo's life had been spared for a little only, until some of the great persons who were acquainted with the cruel deed were apprehended. All therefore looked forward with intense anxiety to the trial of these men, and it was confidently demanded that, as so much pains had been taken in the recent parliament to criminate the queen, the same care should be employed to discover who else were guilty, that, by the publication of the confessions of Cullen, Tallo, and Hepburn, the regent would at length reveal the names of those great accomplices who had hitherto escaped. But Moray had neither the power nor the will to make this exposure. The trials were shamefully hurried over. The culprits were arraigned, convicted, and executed in one day, (January 3.) Although Hepburn of Bolton, in his speech on the scaffold, directly asserted that Argyle, Huntly, and Lethington had subscribed to the bond for the murder, no arrest of these persons followed; the judicial confessions which were made by him and his accomplices were suppressed at the time; and, when subsequently brought forward to be exhibited in England, it was found that they had been manifestly tampered with, and contained evidence against no one but themselves and Bothwell.³

¹ Bedford to Cecil, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., September 16, 1567. Also Drury to Cecil, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., September 30, 1567.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, June 14, 1567, Berwick. Scrope to Cecil, June 16, 1567, Carlisle, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury

These proceedings told strongly against the regent, and, making every allowance for the miserable state of the law in these times, it is impossible to exculpate him from the charge of having lent himself to a plan for the defeat of justice. Nor does it need any great discernment to discover both the means by which the truth was suppressed and the motive for such base conduct. Argyle was Lord Justice-General, the head and fountain of the criminal jurisprudence of the country. By his deputy the trials were conducted, and Argyle was a principal accomplice in the king's murder. The confessions were made before the Lords of the Privy-council, and amongst these Lords were Morton, Huntly, Lethington, and Sir James Balfour, all of them parties to the murder. Lastly, Moray was regent of the realm, but he had been placed in the high office by these very men, and his tenure was still so insecure that a new coalition might have unseated him.

Such conduct, although politic so far as his own greatness was concerned, disappointed the people, and was loudly condemned. Handbills and satirical poems, which upbraided his partiality, were fixed to the doors of the Privy-council and of his own house. Of these one was in the following pithy terms:—

“Quæritur.

“Why John Hepburn and John Hay of Tallo are not compelled openly to declare the manner of the king's slaughter, and who consented thereunto?”⁴

Another was a pasquinade, of which the truth was more striking than the poetry. It bore the title of a letter sent by Maddé unto my Lord Regent, and the whole estates, and strongly insinuated that Hay and Hepburn

to Cecil, January 4, 1567-8. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, January 7, 1567-8. Ibid. Forster to Cecil, Alnwick, 11th January, 1567-8. Ibid. Drury to Cecil, Berwick, 21st January 1567.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Questions to be absolved by the Lords of the Articles, 4th January 1567-8.

were about to be hurried out of life and their confessions suppressed, lest they should discover the principal subscribers of the bond for the king's death.¹

By his partial conduct, Moray not only estranged the people, but it was soon apparent that, notwithstanding all his efforts, he could not long keep his party together. Even in the parliament his legislation on the subject of religion had been condemned by Athole, Caithness, and the Bishop of Moray; and the provision for the ministers of the Church was an unpopular measure with a majority of the lords. He had endeavoured, indeed, to secure the support of the chief nobility and barons by rewards and favours. Lethington had received the sheriffship of Lothian, Hume that of Lauderdale, Morton the promise of the Lord High-Admiral's place, vacant by the forfeiture of Bothwell; Kirkaldy of Grange had been made governor of Edinburgh castle, and Huntly and Argyle were courted by the prospect held out to them of a matrimonial alliance with the regent's daughter and sister-in-law.² But even these prizes and promises sometimes failed in their effect, every one being ready to magnify his own merit, and to anticipate a higher distinction than was bestowed. Nor did it escape observation that his conduct since his elevation had become haughty and distant to those proud nobles who had so recently been his equals; whilst he was open to flattery, and suffered inferior men to gain his confidence. Even the vigour with which he punished the

riot and lawlessness of the Border district failed to increase his popularity, the kingdom having been so long accustomed to a more relaxed rule that justice was construed into tyranny.

Owing to such causes, it was apparent that Moray's government, soon after the dissolution of parliament, was in a precarious state. The Hamiltons hated him; to Lethington intrigue and change seemed to be the only elements in which he could live; Herries and the Melvils were strongly suspected; Balfour, who knew many secrets, and was capable of any treachery, had left court in disgust; Athole was beginning to be lukewarm;³ the friends of the Catholic religion resented his late conduct; and the people, never long in one mind, began to pity the protracted and rigorous imprisonment of the queen.⁴ All these circumstances were against him; but they were trivial to the blow which now fell upon him, for it was at this very crisis that Mary effected her escape in a manner that almost partakes of romance.

Since her interview with Moray, the captive queen had exerted all the powers of fascination, which she so remarkably possessed, to gain upon her keepers. The severe temper of the regent's mother, the lady of the castle, had yielded to their influence;⁵ and her son, George Douglas, the younger brother of Lochleven, smitten by her beauty, and flattered by her caresses, enthusiastically devoted himself to her interest. It was even asserted that he had aspired to her hand, that his mother talked of a divorce from Bothwell, and that Mary, never insensible to admiration, and solicitous to secure his services, did not check his hopes.⁶ However this

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 4th Jan. 1567-8. A letter sent by Maddé to My Lord Regent and the haill estates:—

" My lordes all, the king is slain,—
Revenge his cause in hand,
Or else your doing is all bot vain,
For all your general Band.

" If ye shall punish but *simple* men,
And let the *principal* pass,
Then God and man shall you misken,
And make you therefore base.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Berwick, Drury to Cecil, Jan. 4, 1567-8. Huntly's son was to marry his daughter; Argyle's brother his sister-in-law.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, January 4, 1567-8. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, January 21, 1567-8. Ibid., same to same, Berwick, February 2, 1567-8. Also ibid., same to same, Berwick, April 2, 1568.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 2d April 1568.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, September 30, 1567. Melvil's Memoirs, p. 199.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C..

may be, Douglas for some time had bent his whole mind to the enterprise, and on one occasion, a little before this, had nearly succeeded; but the queen, who had assumed the dress of a laundress, was detected by the extraordinary whiteness of her hands, and carried back, in the boat which she had entered, to her prison.¹

This discovery had nearly ruined all, for Douglas was dismissed from the castle, and Mary more strictly watched; but nothing could discourage her own enterprise, or the zeal of her servant. He communicated with Lord Seton and the Hamiltons; he carried on a secret correspondence with the queen; he secured the services of a page who waited on his mother, called little Douglas, and by his assistance at length effected his purpose. On the evening of the 2d of May, this youth, in placing a plate before the castellan, contrived to drop his napkin over the key of the gate of the castle, which, for security, was always placed beside him when at supper, and carried it off unperceived: he hastened to the queen, and hurrying down to the outer gate, they threw themselves into the little boat which lay there for the service of the garrison. At that moment Lord Seton and some of her friends were intently observing the castle from their concealment on a neighbouring hill; a party waited in the village below, while, nearer still, a man lay watching on the brink of the lake.² They could see a female figure, with two attendants, glide swiftly from the outer gate. It was Mary herself, who, breathless with delight and anxiety, sprung into the boat, holding a little girl, one of her maidens, by the hand; while the page, by locking the gate behind them, prevented immediate pursuit. In a moment her white veil with its broad red fringe (the concerted signal of success) was seen glancing in the

Drury to Cecil, April 2, 1568. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, —— to Cecil, May 9, 1568.

¹ Keith, p. 470.

² Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXI., from the MSS. of Prince Labanoff; and Letter of Kirkaldy to Lochieven, Morton MSS.

sun; the sign was recognised and communicated; the little boat, rowed by the page and the queen herself, touched the shore; and Mary, springing out with the lightness of recovered freedom, was received first by George Douglas, and almost instantly after by Lord Seton and his friends. Throwing herself on horseback, she rode at full speed to the Ferry, crossed the Firth, and galloped to Niddry Castle, having been met on the road by Lord Claud Hamilton, with fifty horse. Here she took a few hours' rest, wrote a hurried despatch to France, despatched Hepburn of Riccarton to Dunbar, with the hope that the castle would be delivered to her, and commanded him to proceed afterwards to Denmark, and carry to his master, Bothwell, the news of her deliverance.³ Then, again taking horse, she galloped to Hamilton, where she deemed herself in safety.

The news of her escape flew rapidly through the kingdom, and was received with joy by a large portion of her nobility, who crowded round her with devoted offers of homage and support. The Earls of Argyle, Cassillis, Eglinton, and Rothes; the Lords Somerville, Yester, Livingston, Herries, Fleming, Ross, Borthwick, and many other barons of power and note crowded to Hamilton. Orders were sent by them to put their vassals and followers in instant motion, and Mary soon saw herself at the head of six thousand men.

She now assembled her council, declared to them that her demission of the government, and consent to the coronation of her son, had been extorted by the imminent fear of death, and appealed for the truth of the statement to Robert Melvil, who stood beside her and solemnly confirmed it. An act of council was then passed,

³ Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXI. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, April 2, 1568. Also MS. Letter, Copy, State-paper Office, —— to Cecil, May 9, 1568. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, May 26, 1568. Also Memoir towards Riccartoun, MS. State-paper Office. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Willok to Cecil, 31st May 1568.

declaring all the late proceedings by which Moray had become regent treasonable and of none effect; and a bond drawn up by the nobility for the defence of their sovereign, and her restitution to her crown and kingdom, which, in the enthusiasm of the moment, was signed by nine earls, nine bishops, eighteen lords, twelve abbots and priors, and nearly one hundred barons. But the queen, though encouraged by this burst of loyalty, felt a desire to avoid the misery of a civil contest, and in this spirit sent a message to Moray with offers of reconciliation and forgiveness.¹

The regent was in Glasgow, a city not eight miles from Mary's camp at Hamilton, engaged in public business, and attended only by the officers of the law and his personal suite, when almost at the same instant he received news of the queen's escape and her overtures for a negotiation. It was a trying crisis—one of those moments in the life of a public man which test his judgment and his courage. Already the intelligence, though but a few hours old, had produced an unfavourable effect upon his party. Some openly deserted, and sought the queen's camp; others silently stole away; many wavered; and not a few, whilst they preserved the show of fidelity, secretly made preparations for joining the enemy.

Under these difficult circumstances Moray exhibited that rapid decision and clearness of judgment which mark a great man. When counselled to retire, he instantly rejected the advice. "Retreat," said he, "must not for a moment be contemplated. It is certain ruin; it will be construed into flight, and every hour's delay will strengthen the queen and discourage our adherents. Our only chance is in an instantaneous attack before Huntly, Ogilvy, and the northern men, have joined the royal force." Pretending, however, to deliberate upon the offers

¹ Keith, p. 475. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 8th May 1568. Endorsed in Cecil's hand. "Band of 9 Earls, 9 Bishops, 18 Lords, and others for defence of the Queen of Scots." Melville's Memoirs, p. 200. Also Drury to Cecil, May 7, 1568. Keith, p. 474.

of negotiation, he gained a brief respite: this he used to publish a proclamation, in which he declared his determination to support the king's government; and sending information to the Merse, Lothian, and Stirlingshire, was rapidly joined by a considerable body of his friends. Morton, Glencairn, Lennox, and Semple lost no time, but marshalled their strength and advanced by forced marches to Glasgow:² Mar despatched reinforcements and cannon from Stirling; Grange, whose veteran experience in military affairs was of infinite value at such a moment, took the command of the horse; and Moray had the good sense to intrust to him the general arrangements for the approaching battle. Hume, also a skilful soldier, not only foiled Hepburn of Riccarton in his attempt to seize Dunbar for the queen,³ but kept the Mersemen from declaring for her, and soon joined the regent with six hundred men, whilst Edinburgh beat up for recruits and sent a small force of hagbutters. The effects which so invariably follow decision and confidence were soon apparent, and in ten days Moray commanded an army of four thousand men.⁴

Amid these preparations Mary sent her servant, John Beaton, to England and the French court, soliciting support. In return, the English queen resolved to despatch Dr Leighton into Scotland with her warm congratulations, and an assurance that if her sister would submit the decision of her affairs to his royal mistress and abstain from calling in any foreign aid, she would speedily either persuade or compel her subjects to acknowledge her authority.⁵ It hap-

² Drury to Cecil, May 7, 1568. Keith, p. 474. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, May 10, 1568. Proclamation of the King of Scots, May 7, 1568, broadside, State-paper Office; printed by Lekprevik. Also ibid., MS. Proclamation of the Regent for the gathering of the country, May 3, 1568.

³ Drury to Cecil, May 6, 1568. Keith, p. 474.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Advertisement of the Conflict in Scotland, May 16, 1568. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXII.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, wholly in Cecil's

pened, too, that shortly previous to her escape, Monsieur de Beaumont, an ambassador from Henry, had arrived from France to solicit, as he affirmed, an interview with the captive princess, which had been positively refused. Some suspected that he came to urge the expediency of a divorce from Bothwell, and a marriage between Mary and the Lord of Arbroath, second son of the Duke of Chastelherault. Others affirmed that, like De Lignerolles, his secret instructions were more favourable to the regent than the queen; but however this may be, he now resorted to the camp at Hamilton, and apparently exerted himself to procure a reconciliation between the two factions.¹

We have already seen that this was agreeable to Mary's own wishes. Her inclination from the first had been to avoid a battle, to retire to Dumbarton, a fortress which had been all along kept for her by Lord Fleming, and to regain by degrees her influence over her nobility and her people. In this wise and humane policy she was opposed by the ambition and fierce impatience of the Hamiltons, who, seeing themselves the strongest party, deemed the moment favourable to crush Moray for ever, and to obtain an ascendency over the queen and the government.²

So far, however, Mary's influence prevailed, that they consented to march from Hamilton to Dumbarton; and Moray, congratulating himself upon their resolution, immediately drew out his little army on the Burghmuir of Glasgow, resolved to watch their movements, and, if possible, bring them to an engagement. For this purpose Grange had previously examined the ground, and the moment he became aware that the queen's army kept the south side of the river, the regent's camp being on

hand, "Instructions for Mr Thomas Leighton, sent into Scotland."

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Cecil, Alnwick, April 30, 1568. Also, MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, Keith, p. 478.

² Memoirs of James the Sixth, p. 25. Melvil's Memoirs, p. 200.

the opposite bank, he mounted a hagbutter behind each of his horsemen, rapidly forded the Clyde, and placed them at the village of Langside, amongst some cottages, hedges, and little yards or gardens which skirted each side of a narrow lane, through which the queen's troops must defile.³

Whilst this manœuvre was successfully performing, Moray, who led the main battle, and Morton, who commanded the vanguard or advance, crossed the river by a neighbouring bridge and drew up their men; a movement which was scarcely completed when the queen's vanguard, two thousand strong, and commanded by Lord Claud Hamilton, attempting to carry the lane, was received by a close and deadly fire from the hagbutters in the hedges and cottage gardens. This killed many, drove them back, and threw their ranks into confusion; but, confident in their numbers, they pressed forward up the steep of the hill, so that the men were already exhausted when they suddenly found themselves encountered by Moray's advance, which was well breathed, and in firm order. It was composed of the flower of the Border pikemen. Morton, who led it, with Hume, Ker of Cessford, and the barons of the Merse, all fought on foot; and when the first charge took place, Grange's clear voice was heard above the din of battle, calling to them to keep their pikes shouldered till the enemy had levelled theirs, and then to push on.⁴ They obeyed him, and a severe conflict took place. It was here only that there was hard fighting; and Sir James Melvil, who was present, describes the long pikes as so closely crossed and interlaced, that, when the soldiers behind discharged their pistols, and threw them or the staves of their shattered weapons in the faces of their enemies, they never reached the ground, but remained lying on the spears.⁵

³ Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 200, 201.

⁴ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 201. MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, May 16, 1568.

⁵ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 201.

For some time the conflict was doubtful, till Grange, perceiving the right wing of the regent's advance (consisting of the Renfrewshire barons) beginning to give way, galloped to the main battle, and brought Lindsay, Lochleven, Sir James Balfour, and their followers to reinforce the weak point. This they did effectually, and their attack was so furious that it broke the queen's ranks and threw all into confusion. Moray, who had hitherto stood on the defensive, contenting himself with repulsing the enemy's cavalry, which was far superior in numbers and equipment to his own, now seized the moment to charge with the main battle, and the flight became universal.¹ At this instant, too, the chief of the Macfarlanes, and two hundred of his Highlanders, broke in upon the scattered fragments of the army with the leaps and yells peculiar to their mode of fighting,² and the pursuit would have been sanguinary but for the generous exertions of the regent, who called out to save the fugitives, and employed his cavalry, with Grange who commanded them, not as instruments of slaughter but of mercy. This decisive battle lasted only three quarters of an hour. On the queen's side there were but three hundred slain—some accounts say only half that number.³ On the regent's only a single soldier fell. Ten pieces of brass cannon were taken, and many prisoners of note. Amongst the rest, the Lords Seton and Ross; the masters, or eldest sons of the Earls of Eglinton and Cassillis; the sheriff of Ayr; the Sheriff of Linlithgow, a Hamilton, who bore their standard in the vanguard; the Lairds of Preston, Innerwick, Pitmilly, Balwearie, Boyne, and Trabrown; Robert Melvil and Andrew Melvil; two sons of the Bishop of St Andrews, and a son of the Abbot of Kilwinning. It

was reported that Argyle was made prisoner, but purposely suffered to escape. On the regent's side, Hume, Ochiltree, and Andrew Car of Faudonside, were severely wounded.⁴ Previous to the conflict Mary had taken her station upon an eminence half a mile distant, which commanded a view of the field. She was surrounded by a small suite, and watched the vicissitudes of the fight with breathless eagerness and hope. At last, when the charge of Moray took place, witnessing the total dispersion of her army, she fled in great terror and at full speed in the direction of Dumfries; nor did she venture to draw bridle till she found herself in the abbey of Dundrennan, sixty miles from

On arriving at this place, which was on the confines of England, the queen declared her intention of retreating into that country and throwing herself upon the protection of Elizabeth. It was a hasty and fatal resolution, adopted against the advice of those faithful servants who had followed her in her flight, and must have been dictated more by the terror of her own subjects than by any well-grounded confidence in the character of Elizabeth. Lord Herries, who accompanied her, had taken the precaution of writing to Lowther, the deputy-governor of Carlisle, desiring to know whether his royal mistress might come safely to that city; but such was her impatience, that before any answer could be returned she had taken a boat and passed over in her riding-dress, and soiled with travel, to Workington, in Cumberland. Here she was recognised by the gentlemen of the country, who conveyed her to Cockermouth, from which Lowther conducted her with all respect and honour to Carlisle.⁵ Amongst her attendants were the Lords Herries, Fleming, and Livingstone.

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 201. Also, History of James the Sixth, p. 26. Also, Calderwood's Account in Keith, p. 480.

² MS., State-paper Office, May 16, 1568. Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland.

³ MS. Original, State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, May 16, 1568. Also, Melvil's Memoirs, p. 202

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, 16th May 1568.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Papers of Mary Queen of Scots. Lowther to Cecil, 17th May 1568. Also, MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements out of Scotland, 18th May 1568.

While still at Workington, the Queen of Scots had written to Elizabeth describing the wrongs she had endured from her rebellious subjects, alluding to the recent defeat at Langside, and expressing her confident hope that the queen would protect and assist her against her enemies. She concluded with these pathetic words, "It is my earnest request that your majesty will send for me as soon as possible, for my condition is pitiable, not to say for a queen, but even for a simple gentlewoman. I have no other dress than that in which I escaped from the field; my first day's ride was sixty miles across the country, and I have not since dared to travel except by night."¹

On receiving this letter, Elizabeth felt that Mary was at last in her power, and she did not hesitate to avail herself of the fatal error which had been committed. Her first orders to the sheriffs on the 19th of May sufficiently shew this. She commanded them to treat the Scottish queen and her suite with honour and respect, but to keep a strict watch, and prevent all escape.² At the same time, Lady Scrope, sister to the Duke of Norfolk, was sent to wait upon her, and Sir Francis Knollys arrived with letters of condolence;³ but impatient under these formalities, and anxious for a personal interview, Mary addressed a second letter to Elizabeth, in which she entreated that, as her affairs were urgent, she might be permitted instantly to see the queen, to vindicate herself from the false aspersions which had been cast upon her by her ungrateful subjects, and to dispel the doubts which she understood were entertained. She had sent up Lord Herries, she said, to communicate with her sister, and Lord Fleming to carry a message to France; but she entreated, if any resolution had been formed

against assisting her, (a decision which must surely come from others, not from Elizabeth's own heart,) leave might be given her as freely to depart from her dominions as she had freely entered them. Nothing could so much injure her cause as delay, and already had she been detained in the state of a prisoner for fifteen days—a proceeding which, to speak frankly, she found somewhat hard and strange. In conclusion, she reminded Elizabeth of some circumstances connected with the ring which she now sent her. It bore the emblem of a heart, and had probably been a gift of the English queen. "Remember," said she, "I have kept my promise. I have sent you my heart in the ring, and now I have brought to you both heart and body, to knit more firmly the tie that binds us together."⁴

The offer in this letter to vindicate herself in person before Elizabeth was earnestly pressed by Mary in her first interview with Scrope and Knollys. Her engaging manner, and the spirit and eloquence with which she defended herself, made a deep impression on both. She openly declared that Morton and Lethington were cognisant of the king her husband's murder; and Knollys confessed that, although he began by accusing her of that dreadful crime, the sight of her tears soon transformed him into a comforter.⁵

Meanwhile Moray lost no time in following up the advantage which he had gained, and after the retreat of the queen, having made an expedition northward, at the head of a large force, and for the moment put down opposition, he returned to the capital, to let loose the vengeance of the laws against those who had resisted his government. Notwithstanding the accusations of his enemies, no instance of cruelty or revenge can be proved against him: whether it was that his nature was really an enemy to blood, or that he found fines and forfeitures a more

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. pp. 29, 33. The original letter is in French, Caligula, C. i. fol. 68.

² Copy, State-paper Office, by the Queen to the Sheriffs, Justices of Peace, &c., of Cumberland.

³ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 52, 53. Lord Scrope and Knollys to the Queen, Carlisle, 29th May 1568.

⁴ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 48-50. His story of James the Sixth, pp. 27, 28.

⁵ Id. Anderson, vol. iv. pp. 58, 59, Knollys to Elizabeth, Carlisle, 30th May 1568.

effectual way of destroying his opponents and enriching his friends.¹ These occupations at home, however, did not prevent his cares for his safety on the side of England. As soon as he heard of Mary's retreat to Carlisle, and her offer to vindicate herself before Elizabeth, he sent up his secretary or confidential servant, Wood, to express his readiness instantly to appear in person with the Earl of Morton to answer any charges brought against him; to produce evidence to justify his conduct and that of his companions, and, as Drury expresses it, to enter himself prisoner in the Tower of London if he did not prove her guilty in the death of the king her husband.²

This proposal of both parties to vindicate themselves before the Queen of England, and to make her the arbiter of their mutual wrongs, came very opportunely to Elizabeth, as she was at that moment engaged with her council in a deliberation on the proper course to be pursued, in consequence of the flight of the Scottish queen. Knollys had already warned her, of the impression made upon the Roman Catholics in the North by her arrival, and had urged the necessity either of granting her assistance, or, if that was held too much, restoring her to liberty. Rumours and speeches, so he wrote, were already blown about the country, exposing, in strong language, the ungratefulness of her detention; and indeed so manifest a wrong was committed by her imprisonment, it involved so flagrant a breach of the common principles of law and justice, that Knollys, an honourable nobleman, felt impatient that he should be made a "jailor," so he expressed it, in such a cause.³

Of all this Elizabeth and her ministers were well aware; but in that unscrupulous and accommodating school of politics for which the times were

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, May 26, 1568.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, May 22, 1568. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, June 17, 1568.

³ Knollys to Cecil, Carlisle, 2d June 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part i. p. 61.

conspicuous, when principle and expediency were found at variance, there was seldom much hesitation which should give way; and it was resolved that, in this instance, honour and justice should be sacrificed to necessity. And here, although I must strongly condemn the conduct of the English queen, it is impossible not to see the difficulties by which she was surrounded: the party which it was her interest to support was that of Moray and the Protestants; she looked with dread on France, and the resumption of French influence in Scotland; within her own realm the Roman Catholics were unquiet and discontented, and in Ireland constantly on the eve of rebellion—if such a word can be used to the resistance of a system too grinding to be tamely borne. All these impatient spirits looked to Mary as a point of union and strength. Had she been broken by her late reverses, had she manifested a sense of the imprudence by which she had been lately guided, or evinced any desire to reform her conduct, or forgive her subjects who had risen against the murderer of her husband more than against herself, the queen might have been inclined to a more favourable course. But the very contrary was the case: her first step after her escape had been to resume her correspondence with Bothwell;⁴ his creatures, Hepburn of Riccarton and the two Ormistons, blotted as accomplices in his crime, had frequent access to her. In her conversations with Knollys and Scrope she could not repress her anticipations of victory and purposes of vengeance, if once again a free princess. She declared that, rather than have peace with Moray, she would submit to any extremity, and call help from Turkey before she gave up the contest; and she lamented bitterly that the delays of Elizabeth emboldened the traitors who had risen against her.⁵ Was the

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, Berwick, 26th May 1568; also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Willock to Cecil, Edinburgh, 31st May 1568.

⁵ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 71, 791. Knollys to Cecil, 11th June 1568. Bishop of

Queen of England at such a crisis, and having such a rival in her power, to dismiss her at her first request, and permit her to overwhelm her friends and allies, to re-establish the Roman Catholic party, and possibly the Roman Catholic religion in Scotland? After such conduct, could it be deemed either unlooked for or extraordinary should she fall from the proud position she now held as the head of the Protestant party in Europe? So argued the far-sighted Cecil, and the queen his mistress followed, or it is probable in this instance anticipated, his counsel.

It was determined to detain Mary a prisoner, to refuse her a personal meeting, to support Moray in the regency, and to induce him to make public the proofs which he possessed of the guilt of his sovereign the Queen of Scots.

With this view, Elizabeth wrote to the regent, and soon after despatched Mr Middlemore with a message both to him and to the Scottish queen. She informed him in her letter that he was accused by his sovereign of the highest crimes which a subject could commit against his prince—rebellion, imprisonment of her person, and her expulsion from her dominions, by open battle. She admonished him to forbear from all hostility; and as her royal sister, who would observe the same abstinence, was content to commit to her the hearing and ordering of her cause, she required him to bring forward his defences against the crimes of which he was accused.¹

Before repairing to Moray in Scotland, Middlemore was admitted to an interview with Mary, at Carlisle. He informed her that his mistress disclaimed all idea of keeping her a prisoner, her present detention at Carlisle having no other object than to save her from her enemies. As to a personal interview, that was at present impossible. She was accused of being an accomplice in a foul and horrible

crime, the murder of her husband. She had made choice of the Queen of England to be the only judge of her cause, and care must be taken not to prejudice her defence, and give a handle to her enemies, by admitting her to her presence before trial had been made of her innocence.

At these words *judge* and *trial*, which escaped Middlemore, Mary's spirit rose, and she at once detected and exposed the artful diplomacy of which she was about to be made the victim. It was God, she exclaimed, who could alone be her judge,—as a queen she was amenable to no human tribunal. Of her own free will, indeed, she had offered to make Elizabeth the confidant of her wrongs, to defend herself against the falsehoods brought against her, and to utter to her such matters as had never yet been disclosed to any living being, but none could compel her to accuse herself; and as to Moray, and those rebels who had joined him, her sister was partial. She was contented, it appeared, that they should come to her presence to arraign her, whilst she, their sovereign, was debarred from that indulgence in making her defence. Who ever heard that subjects and traitors should be permitted to plead against their prince? And yet, said she, if they must needs come, bid the queen, my sister, call up Morton and Lethington, who are said to know most against me—confront me with them—let me hear their accusations, and then listen to my reply. But, she added significantly,—I suspect that Lethington would be loath of such an errand.²

It had been Mary's idea, from some expressions used by Scrope and Knollys in their first interview,³ that the English queen would be induced to restore her without inquiry, or at least by an inquiry so regulated as to criminate her subjects without permitting them to reply; but the mission of Middlemore dispelled this notion. She found that not only was she to be

Durham to Cecil, 27th June 1568. MS. State-paper Office, B.C.

¹ Elizabeth to Moray, June 8, 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 68, 69.

² Anderson, vol. iv. part i. p. 90. Middlemore to Cecil, 14th June 1568.

³ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. p. 55. Scrope and Knollys to Elizabeth, 29th May 1568.

refused an interview with the English queen, but that Moray had been already called upon to repair to England, and to justify his conduct by bringing forward his proofs against his sovereign. Against this she loudly protested, and at once declared that she would endure imprisonment, and even death, sooner than submit to such indignity.¹ Such conduct was, no doubt, completely consonant to her feelings and her rights as a free princess, and may have been quite consistent with her complete guiltlessness of the charges brought against her; but it seems to me that complete innocence would have been impatient to have embraced even the opportunity of an imperfect defence, rather than endure the atrocious aspersions with which she was now loaded.

Moray in the meantime acted with his accustomed calmness and decision. Having received Middlemore's message at Dumfries, hostilities against Mary's partisans were suspended at the request of the English queen, and he professed his readiness to repair to England in person, accompanied by Morton, rather than that the truth should not be fully investigated;² but previous to this there was one point upon which he desired to be satisfied. It was evident, he said, that in a cause involving such grave results nothing could be more ruinous for him than to accuse the queen, the mother of his sovereign, and afterwards, as he expressed it, "to enter into qualification with her."³ Again, if the accusation should proceed, and he was able to prove his allegations, he was solicitous to know what was likely to follow. As to such letters of the Queen of Scots as were in his possession, he had already sent translations of them by his servant Wood; and he would gladly understand whether, in the event of the originals agreeing with these translations, their contents would

be judged sufficient to establish her accession to the murder.⁴

This preliminary inquiry, so artful in its object, for it is evident it enabled the regent to arrange or amend his proofs according to the instructions which he might receive from England, was intrusted to Middlemore, who, on his return to the English court, reported it to Elizabeth, and at the same time informed her of Mary's resolution to decline the intended investigation. Cecil's answer was framed with the evident view of being communicated by Lord Herries, who was then at the English court, to his sovereign. It informed the regent that Elizabeth neither meant to promote any accusation of the Scottish queen, nor to proceed to any condemnation; that her single purpose was to settle all disputes, to allow of no faults in her sister, to bring the controversy to a happy conclusion with surety to all parties, and to esteem no proof sufficient till both parties were heard.⁵

Such a declaration must have startled Moray; and had he believed it, it is evident from the cautious tone of his previous inquiries that no accusation of the Queen of Scots was to be looked for from him. But Elizabeth at this moment exerted all the powers of that state craft in which she was so great an adept to blind both Moray and Mary. It was her object to persuade the regent that, whatever might be her assurances to Mary, she really intended to try the cause, and if he could prove her guilty, to keep her where she was,—in prison; it was her purpose, on the other hand, to convince Mary that she would never permit Moray to bring forward any accusation, but quashing all odious criminalities, promote a reconciliation with her subjects, and restore her to her dignity. The negotiations were conducted on the part of the Scottish queen by Lord Herries, who was then

¹ Mary to Elizabeth, 13th June 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. p. 97, part i.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 17th June 1568.

³ MS. State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, with enclosure, 22d June 1568.

⁴ Goodall, vol. ii. p. 75, Moray's answer to Middlemore, 22d June 1568.

⁵ Goodall, vol. ii. p. 89. Answer by Cecil to the Earl of Moray's proposals, 31st June 1568.

at the English court: and, by Cecil's directions, such only of this nobleman's proposals as it was deemed expedient Moray should know were communicated to the regent,¹ whilst from Mary we may believe the same concealment was made of Moray's entire messages.

These artful transactions occupied nearly a month, and were interrupted, not only by the suspicions and delays of both parties, but by the state of Scotland. In that country Moray's unpopularity was now excessive, whilst the queen's friends were daily rising into confidence and strength. The severity of the regent, and the terrors of an approaching parliament, in which the dismal scenes of forfeiture and confiscation were expected to be renewed, had so estranged his supporters and united his enemies, that he began to be alarmed not only for his government, but for his life. A conspiracy for his assassination was discovered, at the head of which were the comptroller Murray of Tullibardine and his brother, the same persons who had acted so bold a part in arraigning Bothwell.² The regent was taunted, and not unjustly, with his former activity in prosecuting the king's murder, and his present lukewarmness; and people pointed ironically to his associate, Sir James Balfour, a man universally detested, by his own confession one of the murderers, and now employed by Moray in the most confidential affairs of the government.³

To such a height had these discontents arisen, that Argyle, Huntly, and the Hamiltons, uniting their strength in favour of the queen, held a convention at Largs, (July 28,) in which they resolved to let loose the Borderers upon England, and wrote to the Duke of Alva, requesting his assistance in the most earnest terms.⁴ Notwith-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, June 22, 1568, with enclosure.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., July 20, 1568, Drury to Cecil. Also ibid., same to same, July 31, 1568. Also ibid., same to same, 3d August 1568.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, July 10, 1568.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 3d August 1568. MS. Letter, State-

standing the delays produced by this miserable state of things, Mary and the regent at last agreed to have their disputes settled by the English queen; and Lord Herries, having arrived at Bolton castle, to which place the Scottish queen had been removed, informed his mistress, in the presence of Scrope and Knollys, of Elizabeth's proposals, and received her formal acquiescence. As some controversy has arisen upon this point, it is right to give his very words. He told Mary that Elizabeth had commanded him to say unto her "that if she would commit her cause to be heard by her highness's order, but not to make her highness judge over her, but rather as to her dear cousin and friend to commit herself to her advice and counsel; that if she would thus do, her highness would surely set her again in her seat of regiment, and dignity regal, in this form and order: —first, her highness would send for the noblemen of Scotland that be her adversaries, to ask account of them, before such noblemen as this queen herself should like of, to know their answer, why they have deposed their queen and sovereign from her regiment; and that if, in their answers, they could allege some reason for them in their so doing, (which her highness thinks they cannot do,) that her highness would set this queen in her seat regal conditionally, that those her lords and subjects should continue in their honours, estates, and dignities to them appertaining. But if they should not be able to allege any reason of their doings, that then her highness would absolutely set her in her seat regal, and that by force of hostility, if they should resist." To this promise, which is quite clear and explicit, Elizabeth annexed as conditions, that Mary should renounce all claim to the crown of England, during the life of the queen, or her issue; that she should forsake the league with France, and, abandoning the mass, receive the Common Prayer after the form of England.⁵ This last stipulation was

paper Office, Lords of Scotland to Duke of Alva.

⁵ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 109, 110.

added with a view of encouraging some symptoms of a disposition to be converted to the Church of England, which had recently appeared in Mary, who had received an English chaplain, and "had grown to a good liking of the Common Prayer."¹

These proposals the Queen of Scots embraced after some hesitation, and commissioners would have been immediately appointed for the trial of this great cause, but for the melancholy state of Scotland. In this country, Huntly and Argyle kept the field at the head of a large force; and, having completely reduced under the queen's power the northern and western parts of the kingdom, were rapidly advancing to the south. Their object was to crush Moray before he could hold the parliament, in which they expected the vengeance of the laws to be let loose against themselves; but their march was arrested by letters from their sovereign, who commanded her friends to desist from hostilities, informing them that Elizabeth would compel the regent to the same course.² This order on Mary's side was obeyed; on Moray's, if indeed ever sent by the English queen, it was openly violated; for scarce were his rivals dispersed, than the Parliament met, (18th August,) and, had it not been for the remonstrances of Lethington, not a baron who had espoused the cause of the queen would have been left unproscribed. As it was, all his efforts could not save the Archbishop of St Andrews, Lord Claud Hamilton, the Bishop of Ross, and many others, who were declared traitors, and forfeited.³ It was in vain that the lords of Mary's party complained of this cruel and unjust conduct, and prepared for revenge. Moray, forgetful of his promises, anticipated their attack, hastily levied a force, overran Annandale and Galloway, and would have reduced all opposition by fire and sword, had not his progress been interrupted by a peremptory message from Elizabeth, who

commanded him instantly to lay down his arms, and send commissioners to York to answer for his conduct to his sovereign. If this was delayed or resisted, she declared her resolution instantly to set Mary at liberty, and assist her against her enemies; adding, that his refusal would convince her of his mistress's innocence and his own guilt.⁴

This mandate Moray did not dare to disobey, whatever may have been his wishes and regrets. He distrusted Elizabeth; he dreaded increasing his unpopularity with the nobles, by openly bringing forward so odious an accusation against his sovereign; he saw that success was doubtful—failure absolute ruin; and when he proposed to select commissioners, all shrunk from so invidious an office. But he had advanced too far to retract; and, digesting as he best could the mortification of being arrested in the course of his victories, he determined to appear personally at York and appointed four commissioners to accompany him. These were the Earl of Morton, the Bishop of Orkney, Lord Lindsay, and the Commendator of Dunfermline. To them he added some assistants, the most noted of whom were Lethington, the secretary, whom he had begun to suspect of a leaning to the queen's cause, and dreaded to leave behind him, the celebrated Buchanan, and Mr James Makgill. Elizabeth now directed the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Sussex, and Sir Ralph Sadler to appear upon her part; and nothing remained but for Mary to appoint her commissioners.⁵

Previous to this, she desired to have a consultation with Lesley, the bishop of Ross; and, on his repair to Bolton, this able and attached servant expressed his sorrow that she had agreed to any conference wherein her subjects should be accused, as Moray and his friends, he said, would undoubtedly utter all they could for their defence, although it were to her dishonour and that of the whole realm; it was vain, he added, to expect that

¹ Knollys to Cecil, 28th July. Anderson, vol. iv. part i. p. 113.

² Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 125, 126.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Camden, apud Kennet, vol. ii. p. 412.

⁵ Goodall, vol. ii. p. 109.

they would openly acknowledge themselves to be ill subjects, and she a good princess ; and it would, in his opinion, be far better to endeavour to bring about an amicable arrangement without any accusation on either side. To this Mary's answer, as reported by Lesley himself, was remarkable. She declared there was no such danger to be apprehended as he supposed, since the judges would be favourable to her, and she was already assured of the good-will of the Duke of Norfolk, who had sent her a message to Bolton, expressive of his attachment to her interests.¹

At this moment Robert Melvil arrived at Bolton with important despatches from Lethington to Mary. He stated that Moray was determined to utter everything he could against her, and had carried with him to York the "letters which he had to produce in proof of the murder ;" he sent her, by the same messenger, copies of these letters which he had clandestinely procured ; he assured her that nothing but a desire to do her service had induced him to come into England, and begged her to send word by Melvil to York what she thought it best for him to do. Mary, after having carefully examined these letters, which were only the translations from the original French into the Scottish language, sent her answer to Lethington. It is worthy of note that it contained no assertion as to the forgery or interpolation of these letters, now, as it appears, communicated to her for the first time. It simply requested him to use his efforts to stay the rigorous accusations of Moray, to labour with the Duke of Norfolk in her favour, and to give full credit to the Bishop of Ross.²

Having concluded her consultation with Lesley and Melvil, she chose her commissioners. They were the Bishop of Ross, Lords Herries, Boyd, and Livingston, the Abbot of Kilwinning, Sir John Gordon of Lochinvar, and Sir James Cockburn of Skir-

¹ Examination of the Bishop of Ross at the Tower. Murdin, p. 52.

² Murdin, pp. 52, 53.

ling.³ These persons having received their instructions, proceeded to York, where they met the regent, the Duke of Norfolk, and the rest of the judges.

So far Elizabeth had been successful, and the position in which she had placed herself was certainly most solemn and imposing. Before her pleaded the Queen of Scots, so late her rival and her opponent, now her prisoner awaiting her award, and acknowledging that, if restored to her dignity, she would owe all to her interference. On the other hand, stood the regent, the representative of the majesty of his sovereign, and the governor of a kingdom, but now receiving the law from her lips whose superior power he did not dare to resist. To hear the cause were assembled the noblest and the wisest in both countries ; and besides this, the misfortunes of Mary had created so great and universal a sensation, that it is no exaggeration when we say the eyes not only of England and Scotland, but of Europe, were fixed upon the conferences now opening at York.

The commissioners, accordingly, having assembled, the proceedings began ; but on the very threshold a sharp dispute arose when Norfolk observed that the regent, having consented to plead before Elizabeth, must first do homage to the English crown. The proposition was received as an insult ; and Moray, red with anger, was hesitating how to answer it, when the cooler Lethington took up the word, and sarcastically remarked, that when the Scottish monarchs received back again the counties of Northumberland and Cumberland, with the manor of Huntingdon, it would be time to talk of homage ; but as to the crown and kingdom of Scotland, both were more free than their own England had recently been, when she paid Peter's pence to Rome.⁴ The mention of the point, however, rendered some notice of it necessary, and after the oaths had

³ Goodall, vol. ii. p. 109.

⁴ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 206. Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 15. Also Norfolk to Cecil, Oct. 9, 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. p. 42.

been administered, mutual protestations were taken.¹ The commissioners of the Scottish queen then gave in their complaint. It stated, in clear and energetic language, the history of the rebellion against Mary, her deposition and imprisonment, the usurpation of the regency by Moray, her escape, defeat, and flight into England, and her confident hope that, by the mediation of Elizabeth, she might be restored to the peaceable enjoyment of her kingdom.²

All now looked with eagerness for Moray's reply, confidently expecting that he would bring forward as his defence the accusation of his sovereign, and the promised proofs of her accession to the murder of the king; but, to the surprise and disappointment of Elizabeth, he was seized with a repetition of his former fears; and, instead of proceeding to any accusation, requested a preliminary conference with the English commissioners. Being admitted to it, he desired to know whether they would grant him an assurance that their mistress would pronounce the Queen of Scots guilty or not guilty, according to the proofs which he laid before them; and, in the event of the conviction of the murder, whether the Queen of England would sanction his proceedings, maintain the government of the king, and support him in his office of regent.³ These questions being remitted by the commissioners to Elizabeth, he gave in his defence, which produced new astonishment. It rested solely on Mary's marriage with Bothwell, and detailed the shameful circumstances by which it was accompanied, with the necessity of rising in arms to defend the prince, and of subjecting the queen to a temporary imprisonment, during which she voluntarily resigned the crown. It added not a syllable, directly or indirectly, accusing Mary of being an accomplice in the murder, and did not even contain a hint or an allusion from which it could be

gathered that the regent ever entertained such a suspicion, (October 10th.)⁴

It was difficult to account for this sudden and unexpected moderation upon the part of Moray. A few weeks only had elapsed since he had been loud in his accusations, and testified the utmost eagerness to bring forward his proofs. He was now silent on the subject; his defence was general, almost to feebleness; and when, after a few days' interval, it was replied to by Mary's commissioners, who urged, forcibly and triumphantly, the coalition between Bothwell and the lords, his trial and acquittal, and their subsequent recommendation of him as a husband to the queen, he sat down apparently dispirited and confuted, and declined saying another word upon the subject.

A secret intrigue, of which we have already had some slight intimation from Mary's conversation with the Bishop of Ross, furnishes us with a key to all this mystery. It originated in the ambition of the Duke of Norfolk, a nobleman then, perhaps, the most powerful subject in England, and who had long been a favourite of Mary's title to the crown. There seems, too, to be little doubt that for some time Norfolk had entertained the idea of a marriage with the Scottish queen, and that he deprecated the present proceedings against her in the strongest manner, although he dared not refuse the task imposed upon him by Elizabeth. These feelings, which he had secretly imparted to the Scottish queen through his sister, Lady Scrope, who waited on her, she had, as we have seen, communicated to Lethington and the Bishop of Ross; and Lethington, on his arrival at York, procured a secret interview with Norfolk.⁵

On this occasion, the duke expressed his astonishment that he and Moray

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 49, 50.
² Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 123, 126.
³ Ibid, vol. ii. p. 130, 131. Oct. 9th, pp. 126, 127.

⁴ Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 139, 144; and *Dépêches de la Motte Fenelon*, published by Mr P. Cooper, vol. i. pp. 17, 18, a very valuable work.

⁵ Examination of the Bishop of Ross. Murdin, p. 53.

should so far forget their honour as to accuse their sovereign before Elizabeth—as if they thought that England was entitled to be a judge or a superior over the kingdom of Scotland. Lethington warmly deprecated the idea, blamed the weakness of the regent, whose own feelings were against the accusation; declared, for his own part, that he was there, as Moray well knew, rather as the friend than the enemy of his sovereign, and professed his readiness to exert every effort to quash the accusation.¹ Norfolk then asked whether he thought in this matter Moray could be trusted, and the secretary affirming that he might, the duke took the regent aside and remonstrated with him on the folly and impolicy of his present conduct. The English queen, his mistress, he said, was resolved during her life to evade the question of the succession—careless what blood might be shed, or what confusion might arise upon the point. As to the true title, none doubted that it lay in the Queen of Scots and her son; and much he marvelled that the regent, whom he had always reputed a wise and honourable man, should come hither to blacken his mistress, and, as far as he could, destroy the prospect of her and her son's succession.² "Besides," added he, "you are grievously deceived if you imagine the Queen of England will ever pronounce sentence in this cause. We are sent here, no doubt, as commissioners, but we are debarred from coming to a decision, and Elizabeth has fully resolved to arrive at none herself. Do you not see that no answers have been returned to the questions which upon this point were addressed by you to us, and forwarded to the queen? Nay, you can easily put the matter to a more certain proof: request an assurance, under the queen's hand, that when you accuse your sovereign and bring forward your proofs she will pronounce sentence. If you get it, act as you please; if it is not given, rest assured my information is correct, and all that will

come of your accusation will be repentance for your own folly."³

This conversation made a deep impression on Moray, already sufficiently alive to the dangerous part he was playing; and when he imparted it in confidence to Lethington and Sir James Melvil, both of them strongly confirmed him in the views stated by Norfolk.⁴ From his brother commissioners, Morton and Makgill, and his secretary Wood, who had drawn up the proofs against the Scottish queen, the regent carefully concealed what had happened; but he determined to follow Norfolk's advice, and bring forward no public accusation till he was assured of the course to be followed by Elizabeth. Such is the secret history of Moray's sudden change, and the present moderation of his conduct towards the queen his sovereign.

But whilst a regard for his own interest prevented him from assuming the character of a public accuser, the regent *privately* exhibited to Norfolk, Sussex, and Sadler the alleged proofs of Mary's guilt, consisting of various bonds or contracts and other papers, besides some letters and love sonnets addressed by her to Bothwell, with a contract of marriage in the handwriting of the Earl of Huntly. These letters had been found, as the Scottish commissioners affirmed, in a little silver casket or coffer; it had been given by the queen to Bothwell, and was afterwards with its contents seized by Morton, and they offered to swear that the letters were written in Mary's own hand. Having carefully inspected them, and drawn up a summary of their contents, Norfolk transmitted it in a letter to Elizabeth, requesting her judgment whether she considered them sufficient to convict the queen of the murder of her husband. He added, at the same time, his own opinion and that of his brother commissioners, that the proof was conclusive against

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 206.
² Ibid., pp. 206, 207.
³ Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 207, 208, 4to edit.
⁴ Melvil's authority here is unquestionable, as he was not only present at York, but the regent made him privy to this secret interview. Also *Dépêches de la Motte Fenelon*, vol. i. p. 17.

* Melvil's Memoirs, p. 208.

her, if the letters were really written with her own hand.¹

This, however, was confidential, and unknown to the world, so that if matters had terminated here the result of the inquiry must have been considered highly favourable to Mary. She had triumphantly confuted Moray; and, after his boastful speeches, he had shrunk from any open accusation. But Elizabeth was not to be so easily defeated. She had resolved that Moray should publicly accuse his sovereign of the murder; she was convinced that such an event would be of the greatest service to England whether the Scottish queen was to be restored to her dignity or detained a prisoner; and with this view she suddenly removed the conferences to Westminster, affirming that York was too distant to allow of a speedy settlement of the controversy, and taking particular care that neither Mary nor her commissioners should suspect any sinister intention upon her part.² How artfully this was managed appears by the original draft of the English queen's letter, still preserved, and partly in Cecil's handwriting. In it Norfolk and his companions were instructed to be especially careful that the Queen of Scots' commissioners should gather no suspicion of the ill success of her cause, but imagine that this new measure was solely intended to accelerate their mistress's restoration to her dignity on safe and honourable terms, both for herself and her subjects.³

It happened that at this moment Moray had made a secret overture to Mary, which rendered this queen less likely to dread any disadvantage to her cause from the removal of the conferences to London. He had sent Robert Melvil to Bolton, to propose scheme, by which all necessity for a accusing his sovereign should be removed, and an amicable compromise

¹ The Commissioners to Elizabeth, 11th October 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 58, 63.

² La Motte Fenelon, vol. iv. p. 18.

³ Original draft, State-paper Office, Papers of Mary, queen of Scots. Oct. 16, 1568, Elizabeth to her Commissioners.

take place. The Scottish queen was to ratify her demission of the crown, which had been made in Lochleven, the regent was to be confirmed in his government, and Mary was to tarry in England, under the protection of Elizabeth, and with a revenue suitable to her royal dignity. On these conditions Moray was contented to be silent; and although at first the captive princess professed much unwillingness to agree to such terms, she was at length convinced by the arguments of Melvil, that such a settlement of the controversy was the best for her interest and honour. She therefore despatched Melvil to carry her consent to Moray;⁴ she wrote to the English queen, expressing her entire satisfaction that her cause and her honour were now placed in her hands, where she most wished them to be,⁵ and she despatched four of her commissioners, Boyd, Herries, the Bishop of Ross, and the Abbot of Kilwinning, to London.

On their arrival Elizabeth admitted them to an audience; assured them that she had carefully weighed all that had been done at York; that the enemies of the Queen of Scots appeared to her to have entirely failed in their defence, as far as they had yet pleaded; and, that their only course was to acknowledge their offences, return to their allegiance, and intercede for pardon, which she would labour to procure them. For this purpose she had removed the conferences to London, and to make the settlement more solemn, had joined some other commissioners to those already named. Nothing now remained but to proceed with the business, first ascertaining whether Moray had anything further to say in his defence.⁶

When the regent repaired along with Lethington and Makgill to London, it was with a determination not to accuse Mary, but to remain true to

⁴ MS. Declaration of Robert Melvil, Hope-toun MS.; also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Knollys to Cecil, 25th October 1568.

⁵ Mary to Elizabeth, 22d Oct. 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. p. 95.

⁶ Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. p. 95. Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 25, 26.

his agreement to Norfolk; and if anything should occur to render its execution difficult or impossible, to fall back upon his scheme for Mary's demission of the crown, which he had so lately proposed, and to which she had consented. But an interview with Elizabeth alarmed and perplexed him; he found, to his dismay, that she was perfectly aware of his intrigues with Norfolk. The whole transactions had been betrayed by a confidant of Mary to Morton; he had indignantly revealed it to Cecil, and from him it reached the queen. Nor were his difficulties lessened by a message from Mary herself, who informed him that the Duke of Norfolk had forbid her to resign the crown; and without his consent she could not abide by her agreement.¹) Nothing could be more embarrassing than his situation. On the one hand, Elizabeth did not conceal her anxiety, that he should accuse the Scottish queen and bring forward his proofs of the murder. She had everything in her power; she already hinted that, in case of his refusal, it might be found necessary to bring forward the Duke of Chastelherault, whose claim to the regency was superior to his own; and it is scarcely matter of wonder that Moray faltered in his resolution. Yet, should he consent to the wishes of the Queen of England, he must bear the disgrace of betraying Norfolk. On the other hand, if he remained true to this nobleman, his fellow-commissioners were ready to arraign him of treachery to them and to the cause of his sovereign. Under these embarrassments he adopted a middle course, and resolved to prepare the accusation, but not to make it public until he had a positive assurance that the Queen of England would pronounce judgment.

Meanwhile Mary became alarmed at some private intelligence which she received from Hepburn of Riccarton, a follower of Bothwell's, who was now in London, and who assured her that so far from being favourable, Elizabeth was decidedly hostile to her, and would probably succeed in compelling Moray

to desert Norfolk and accuse his sovereign.² To meet such an emergency she sent additional instructions to her commissioners, by which their powers were limited to the single act of extending her clemency to her disobedient subjects. She added, that if they found any encouragement given to her adversaries to accuse her, they were instantly to demand her personal admission to the presence of Elizabeth, and if this was refused, to break up the negotiation.³

The conferences were now opened in the chamber called the *Camera depicta* at Westminster, the commissioners of the Scottish queen having declined to meet in any place where a judicial sentence had been pronounced. They protested against anything which was now done being interpreted against the rights of their mistress, who, as a free princess, acknowledged no judge or superior on earth; and they required, that as Moray had been admitted to the presence of Elizabeth, and had calumniated his sovereign, the English queen should grant the same privilege to the Queen of Scots, and listen to her defence from her own lips. To this Elizabeth replied, that it was far from her intention to assume the character of a judge, or in anything to touch their sovereign's honour; but, that to admit her into her presence was impossible till the cause was decided.⁴

With this answer they were compelled to be content; and having retired, Moray and his friends were called in, when, being informed that the defences recently made by them at York were considered inconclusive, they were required to say whether they could urge anything further in their behalf. To encourage them to speak openly, Sir Nicholas Bacon, the lord-keeper, assured the regent, in reply to the demands made at York, that if the Queen of Scots should be proved guilty of the murder of her

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Papers of Mary, queen of Scots, Knollys to Cecil, 21st November 1568.

³ Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 185-187.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 188, 189. November 23, 1568.

husband, she should either be delivered into his hands, her life being sufficiently secured, or be kept in England; and he added, that if found guilty, Moray should be continued in the regency, till it was shewn that another had a superior right.¹

By this declaration Moray was somewhat reassured. He had prepared his accusation, and the paper which contained it was at that moment in the possession of John Wood, his secretary, who sat beside him at the table, and for greater security kept it in his bosom. The regent now rose and declared how unwilling he and his friends had ever been to touch the honour of their sovereign, or to publish to strangers what might eternally defame her; how readily, had it been possible, they would have secured her reputation and preserved their prince, even at the price of their own exile; and he solemnly protested, that if at last they were compelled to pursue a different course, the blame was not to be imputed to them, but rested with their enemies, who constrained them to adopt it in their own defence, and dragged into light the proofs which they had hitherto concealed.² Having delivered this protest in writing, Moray prepared to give in his accusation; but before he took this last and fatal step, he required an assurance, under the English queen's hand, that she would pronounce a judgment. To this Cecil replied, "that he had ample assurance already; and it ill became him to suspect or doubt the word of their royal mistress. Where," added he, "is your accusation?" "It is here," said Wood, plucking it from his bosom, "and here it must remain till we see the queen's handwrit;" but as he spoke the paper was snatched from him by Bothwell, the bishop of Orkney, who sprang to the table pursued by Wood, and, mid the ill-suppressed laughter of the English commissioners, laid it before them. The scene, as it is described by Melvil, must have been an extraordinary one.

¹ Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 201, 202, November 26, 1568.

² Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 115, 118.

The regent was deeply mortified, and Cecil, smiling triumphantly, enjoyed his confusion; Lord William Howard, a rough seaman, shouted aloud, and commended the activity of Bishop Turpy, a nickname of Orkney; and Lethington, who was the saddest of the company, whispered in Moray's ear that he had ruined his cause for ever.³

The die, however, was cast, and the charge which had been so long withheld was now preferred in the broadest terms. The regent stated, that as Bothwell was the chief executor of the horrible murder of their late sovereign, so he and his friends affirmed that the queen his wife had persuaded him to commit it; that she was not only in the foreknowledge of the same, but a maintainer of the assassins, as she had shewn by thwarting the course of justice, and by marrying the chief author of that foul crime.⁴ To give additional force and solemnity to this proceeding, the Earl of Lennox, father to the murdered king, at this moment presented himself before the commissioners; and, having bewailed in pathetic terms the miserable fate of his son, delivered to them a paper, in which he accused Mary in direct terms of conspiring his death.⁵

When informed of this proceeding, the deputies of this princess expressed the utmost indignation; they declared that nothing could be more false and calumnious than such a statement; that some of those persons who now with shameless ingratitude sought to blacken their sovereign, were themselves deeply implicated in the murder; and they required an immediate audience of Elizabeth.⁶ When admitted to her presence, they complained in strong terms of the manner in which she had conducted the proceedings; they reminded her how carefully it had been provided that, in the absence of their royal mistress, nothing should be done which might affect her honour

³ Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 210, 211.

⁴ Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. p. 119.

⁵ Ibid., p. 122.

⁶ Goodall, Appendix, vol. ii. pp. 209-213, inclusive.

and royal estate; this, they declared, had been directly infringed; she had admitted her subjects into her presence; they had been encouraged to load her with the most atrocious imputations; it was now, therefore, their duty, as custodiers of their mistress's honour, to demand that, in common justice, she should also be heard in person; and to beseech her to arrest the authors of such slanderous practices, till they should answer the charges which should be brought against them.¹

This demand perplexed Elizabeth. It was a just and spirited assertion on the part of the Scottish commissioners of their mistress's undoubted right; but the English queen had not the slightest intention of acquiescing in it. She had now gained her first point, Moray having at last publicly arraigned Mary of the murder; but another and greater object remained: she was desirous of getting possession of the proofs of her guilt; of exhibiting them to her council; and either publishing them to the world, or employing them in intimidating her unhappy prisoner into an acceptance of any terms she dictated. Her mode of accomplishing this was artful and politic. It was, no doubt, quite reasonable, she said, addressing the commissioners of the queen, that their mistress should appear to defend herself against so heinous an imputation as the murder of her husband, a crime of which she never had believed her guilty. As for a personal interview, the only reason why she had refused this was on account of the common slander against her; and now, since the accusation had been publicly made, it would be inconsistent, alike with her honour and that of their mistress, to consent to any compromise or agreement, until the regent and his friends had been called upon to prove their allegations. She, therefore, had resolved to send for them and demand their proofs, after which she would willingly hear their mistress.²

¹ Goodall, Appendix, vol. ii. pp. 213-219.
La Motte Fenelon, vol. i. pp. 38-51.

² Goodall, vol. ii. p. 221, December 4.

The commissioners remonstrated against the manifest partiality and injustice of such a proceeding: they observed, that her majesty must, of course, act as she pleased; but, for their part, they would never consent that their sovereign's rebellious subjects should be further heard, till she herself were admitted to declare her innocence; and they ended by solemnly protesting that nothing done hereafter should in any way affect or prejudge her rights.³ So far everything on their part was consistent and agreeable to the indignant feelings of a person unjustly accused; but their next step is perplexing, and seems not so easily reconcilable with Mary's perfect innocence; for, on the same day, they made a final proposal for a compromise, by which Moray, notwithstanding his accusation, might still once more be admitted to the favour of his sovereign, and the disputes between her and her subjects be settled.⁴ They added that this scheme seemed to them most consonant to the first intentions of both the queens. It was rejected, however, by Elizabeth: any compromise, she said, would now affect Mary's honour; better far would it be to summon her accusers, to réprimand and chastise them for the defamation of their sovereign. She would not call for proofs; but if they persisted in their charge, it would be proper to hear what they could allege in their defence.⁵

Such a proposal for a compromise would certainly tell strongly against the innocence of the Scottish queen, had it proceeded from herself, after the accusation brought forward by Moray; but this was not the case. It came from her commissioners alone, and, as they afterwards asserted, without any communication with their mistress. When at last they found it declined, and perceived that Elizabeth had formed a resolution to hear from Moray the alleged proofs of their sovereign's guilt, before she was suffered

³ Goodall, vol. ii. p. 223.

⁴ See Anderson, vol. iv. part. A. pp. 135, 137, for the particulars of this last proposal.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 139, 140.

to open her lips in her defence, they resolved to be equally peremptory : as soon, therefore, as the regent was summoned before the English commissioners, the Bishop of Ross and his associates demanded admission ; and, coming forward, at once dissolved the conference. They declared, that since the Queen of England was determined to receive from the regent the proofs of his injurious allegations against their sovereign, before she was heard in her presence, they were compelled to break off all proceedings, and they delivered a written protest, that nothing done hereafter should prejudice the honour or estate of their royal mistress. Cecil and the commissioners declined to receive this paper, affirming that it misrepresented the answer of the English queen ; but the Scottish deputies withdrew, repeating that they would neither treat nor appear again.¹

From this moment the conferences were truly at an end, but Elizabeth's object was still to be attained ; Moray, therefore, was charged with having defamed his sovereign by an unfounded accusation, and required to defend himself. He did so, by the production of those celebrated letters and sonnets, which Elizabeth had already secretly examined, and of which he now produced both the originals and the copies. Of these, the originals have long since disappeared, and the garbled state of the copies which now exist, and which appear to have been tampered with, certainly renders their evidence of a suspicious nature. At this time, however, both originals and copies were laid before the commissioners, after which the depositions of some servants of the late king, and the confessions of Powrie and others, executed for the murder, were produced.

Having proceeded thus far, and the English commissioners being in possession of the whole proofs against the Scottish queen, it might have been expected that some opinion would have been pronounced by them. Nothing of this kind, however, took place,

neither did Elizabeth herself think it then expedient to say a word upon the subject ; but, after a short season of delay, she resolved to bring the cause before a more numerous tribunal. With this view, the chief of her nobility were summoned to attend a meeting of the privy-council. There came, accordingly, the Earls of Northumberland, Westmoreland, Shrewsbury, Worcester, Warwick, and Huntingdon, and from some expressions dropt by Cecil, in a letter to Norris,² it may be gathered that it was intended, with their advice, to come at last to some important and final decision. Yet this third solemn preparation ended, like the rest, in nothing. After the lords had been sworn to secrecy, the whole evidence against the Queen of Scots was laid before them ; and instead of a judgment upon the authenticity of the proofs, and the alleged guilt of the accused, these noble persons contented themselves with a vague allusion to the "foul matters they had seen," and a general approval of the course adopted by their sovereign. Elizabeth next sent for the Scottish commissioners ; and, in reply to their demand so recently made for the admission of their royal mistress to defend herself in her presence, informed them that, from the turn matters had taken, it had become now more impossible than ever to listen to such a request. It was easy, she said, for Mary either to send some confidential person to court with her defence, or to permit the English queen to despatch some nobleman to receive it, or to authorise her deputies to reply to the English commissioners. If she still refused to adopt any one of these methods to vindicate herself, she must not be surprised if so obstinate a silence should be interpreted into an admission of guilt.³

These specious offers and arguments did not impose upon the Bishop of Ross and his colleagues. They remonstrated loudly against the injustice with which their royal mistress had

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 145, 146.
December 6, 1568.

² Cabala, p. 155.

³ Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 257, 260, 263, 264.

been treated; they insisted that since she was denied the common privilege of a personal defence, she should be permitted to return as a free princess to her own kingdom, or, if she preferred it, to retire to France; and at the same time, as their services were no longer necessary, they requested their dismissal from court.¹ The queen replied, they might go to Bolton and consult with their mistress, but should not leave England till the conference was at an end. She then addressed to Mary a letter, of which the object seemed to be, to intimidate her into a defence; but so perplexed and capricious was Elizabeth's mind at this moment, that on the next day she changed her measures; and, in a private communication to Knollys, the vice-chamberlain, who then had charge of the Scottish queen, declared her anxiety to proceed no farther in her cause. It appeared to her, she said, a far better method to endeavour to persuade Mary to resign the government into the hands of Moray; whilst the prince her son, for his safety, should be brought into England. She herself, too, it was added, might continue in that country, and this whole cause of hers, wherewith she had been charged, be committed to perpetual silence.²

Knollys was directed to manage matters so that this proposal might proceed from herself; but whilst Elizabeth was thus tossed about by so many intricate and contradictory schemes, Mary had transmitted directions to her commissioners which defeated this last artifice. She informed them, that although she still insisted on her right to be heard in person, and adhered to her protestation, it was not her intention to pass over in silence the atrocious calumnies with which she had been assailed; that Moray and his accomplices in accusing her had been guilty of a traitorous falsehood, and had imputed to her a crime of which they were guilty themselves. She then enjoined them to demand inspection both of the copies and the originals of the letters which had been

produced against her, and she engaged to give such an answer as should triumphantly establish her innocence.

This spirited appeal, which was made by the Scottish commissioners in peremptory terms,³ threw Elizabeth into new perplexity, and it required all the skill of Cecil to evade it. Recourse was had to delay, but it produced no change; and on the 7th January the Bishop of Ross required an audience, in which he repeated the demand in still stronger language. His royal mistress, he said, was ready to answer her calumniators, and once more required, in common justice, to see the letters, or at least the copies of the letters which had been produced by her enemies, that she might prove them to be themselves the principal authors of the murder, and expose them to all Christian princes as liars and traitors.⁴ This fair and moderate request Elizabeth evaded. It appeared to her better, she said, that Mary should resign the crown in favour of her son; that, on the ground of being weary of the government, she should remain privately in England, and make a compromise with her enemies.⁵ It was instantly answered by Ross, that he had his mistress's command to declare that to such a condition she would never agree: if the letters were produced, and she was permitted to see the evidence against her, she was prepared to defend herself. She was ready also to entertain any honourable proposal by which a pardon might be extended to her disobedient subjects, notwithstanding the greatness of their offences; but to resign her crown would be to condemn herself; it would be said she was afraid of a public accusation, and shrank from inquiry: this, therefore, she would sooner die than consent to, and the last words she uttered should be those of a Queen of Scotland.⁶

Elizabeth struggled violently against this determination, and was unwilling to receive it. She entreated Ross

³ Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 288, 289.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 297, 299.

⁵ Ibid., p. 300.

⁶ Ibid., p. 301.

¹ Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 267, 268.

² Ibid., vol. ii. p. 279, Dec. 22, 1568.

again to write to his mistress, but this he steadily refused. She required him and his colleagues to confer with her council. They did so, but it was only to reiterate Mary's final resolution.¹

It was now become absolutely necessary that the Queen of England should either grant this last request, or refuse it, and pronounce a final judgment. Moray earnestly urged the necessity of a return to his government. From Mary no change of mind was to be expected. The regent was accordingly summoned before the privy-council, and Cecil delivered to him and his associates the definitive sentence of Elizabeth. Its terms were most extraordinary : he stated, on the one hand, that as Moray and his adherents had come into England, at the desire of the queen's majesty, to answer to an accusation preferred by their sovereign, she was of opinion that nothing had as yet been brought forward against them which impaired their honour or allegiance. He declared, on the other hand, with regard to Mary, that nothing had been produced or shewn by them against the queen their sovereign, which should induce the Queen of England, for anything yet seen, to conceive an ill opinion of her good sister ; and he concluded by informing Moray that he should immediately receive permission to return to his government.² From this judgment, which was virtually an acquittal of Mary, it seems an inevitable inference, that the English queen, after having had the most ample opportunities of examining the letters which had been produced, either considered them to be forgeries by the other party, or found that they had been so interpolated, garbled, and tampered with, as to be unworthy of credit ; for no one can deny, that if the letters were genuine, the Queen of Scots was guilty of the murder.

But if Mary was acquitted, Moray also was found guiltless ; and these two conclusions, so utterly inconsistent

¹ Goodall, vol. ii. p. 304, January 9, 1568-9.

² Ibid. p. 305 January 10, 1568-9.

with each other, Elizabeth had the hardihood to maintain. When we consider the solemnity of the cause, the length of the conferences, the direct accusation of Moray and his associates, the recrimination of the queen, the evidence produced, and the impossibility that both parties could be innocent, the sentence of Elizabeth is perhaps the most absurd judicial opinion ever left upon record.

It was followed by a scene no less remarkable. A privy-council was called at Hampton Court, on the eve of Moray's departure. It included the Duke of Norfolk, the Earls of Pembroke, Derby, Bedford, and Leicester, with Sir William Cecil, and Sir Walter Mildmay. Before it were summoned the Bishop of Ross and Lord Herries, on the one side ; on the other came Moray, Morton, Lethington, Makgill, Orkney, Balnaves, and Buchanan ; and when they were met, Cecil, rising up, delivered a message from the queen his mistress. She had determined, he said, to give the Earl of Moray and his adherents permission to depart for Scotland ; but a rumour having arisen that they were concerned in the murder of the king, Moray had desired to be confronted with the deputies of the Queen of Scots, and he now came there to know whether they would accuse him or his adherents, in their mistress's name or in their own.³

To this challenge the Queen of Scots' commissioners immediately answered, that in their own name they had affirmed, and would affirm, nothing ; but, with respect to the queen their mistress, they had received her written instructions to accuse the Earl of Moray and his adherents as the principal authors, and some of them the actual perpetrators of the murder. They had communicated, they said, their sovereign's letters on this point to the Queen of England—they had publicly preferred their accusation, they had constantly adhered to it—they had offered to defend the innocence of their mistress, they had demanded in vain an inspection of the

³ Goodall, vol. ii. p. 307.

letters produced against her, and even now, if exact copies were furnished, they would undertake her defence, and demonstrate, by convincing proofs, what persons were indeed guilty of the murder of the king.¹ Moray strongly asserted his innocence, and offered to go to Bolton and abide in person the arraignment of his sovereign. It was answered, that such a step was wholly unnecessary, as her written accusation had been produced to the Queen of England. Both parties then left the council, and next day the regent received permission to return to Scotland, (January 12.)²

It remained to dismiss their antagonists with an appearance of liberality, and being once more called before the privy-council, Cecil intimated to them his mistress's consent that the Queen of Scots should have copies of the letters,* (the originals having been redelivered to Moray,) but he first required them to procure a declaration, under her seal and signature, that she would reply to the charges which they contained. It was answered, that Elizabeth had already two writings of the precise tenor required, under the queen's hand; to seek for more was only a vexatious delay. The whole proceedings, from first to last, had been partial and unjust. If the regent and his adherents were permitted to depart, why was their royal mistress, why were they themselves, debarred from the same privilege? If the Queen of England were really solicitous that she should enter upon her defence, let her adversaries be detained until it was concluded. To this spirited remonstrance, it was coldly and briefly replied, that Moray had promised to return when called for; as for the Scottish commissioners, they also would probably be allowed to depart; but for many reasons the Queen of Scotland could not be suffered to leave England. Against this iniquitous sentence, no redress was to be hoped for; the deputies could only protest that nothing done by her in captivity should prejudge her honour,

¹ Goodall, vol. ii. p 308.

² Ibid., p. 309.

*estate, or person, and having taken this final precaution, they left the council.³

It is difficult, from the conferences at York and Westminster, to draw any certain conclusion as to the probability of Mary's guilt or innocence. Both Elizabeth and the Queen of Scots acted with great art; and throughout the discussions neither the professions of the one nor of the other were sincere. Thus the English queen, whilst she affected an extreme anxiety to promote a reconciliation between Mary and her subjects, was really desirous that the breach should be made irreconcilable, by the accusation of Moray, and the production of the letters. Nor does there seem to be any doubt that Norfolk's assertion was correct, when he assured Lethington she had no intention of pronouncing a decision. On the other hand, it is clear that, during the first part of the conferences, both Mary and her advisers, Ross, Herries, and Lethington, were, from whatever motive, anxious to suppress Moray's charge; that they deprecated the production of his evidence; and were only induced to go into the investigation from the hope which Elizabeth held out that she would not permit an accusation, but exert herself, under all circumstances, to promote a reconciliation between the Scottish queen and her subjects, and restore her to the throne. It must have struck the reader, that whenever, by means of the private letters which have been preserved, we get behind the scenes, and are admitted to Mary's secret consultations with her commissioners, or to their own opinion on the conduct of the cause, we meet with no assertion of the forgery of the letters; and it seems to me difficult to reconcile her agreement to resign the crown, and suppress all inquiry—a measure only prevented by the interference of Norfolk—with her absolute innocence. On the other hand, there are some circumstances, especially occurring during the latter part of the conferences, which tell strongly in her

³ Goodall, vol. ii. pp. 310, 313.

favour. The urgency with which, from first to last, she solicited a personal interview with Elizabeth, and promised, if it were granted, to go into her defence; the public and oft-repeated assertion of the forgery of the letters, and the offer to prove this if copies were furnished to her commissioners; Elizabeth's evasion of this request; her entire suppression of these suspicious documents; their subsequent disappearance; and the schemes of Norfolk for a marriage with Mary; these are all circumstances which seem to me exceedingly irreconcilable with her being directly guilty of the murder of her husband. Upon the whole, it appears to me that, in the present state of the controversy, we are really not in possession of evidence sufficient to enable any impartial inquirer to come to an absolute decision. I have already pointed out, as the circumstances occurred, such moral evidence against the queen as arose out of her conduct both before and after her marriage with Bothwell. The discussions at York and Westminster do not materially affect this evidence, either one way or the other; and, so far as we judge of these conferences by themselves, they leave the mind under the unsatisfying and painful impression that the conduct of the Scottish queen throughout the whole investigation, was that of a person neither directly guilty, nor yet wholly innocent.

But whilst animadverting on the proceedings of Elizabeth and Mary in these celebrated conferences, the conduct of the regent must not be forgotten. He was then perfectly aware of the accession of both Lethington and Morton to the murder of the king: this both prior and subsequent events proved; yet did he not scruple to bring these two accomplices to England, and employ Morton as his assistant in the accusation of his sovereign. Such a course, which could be dictated only by the ambition of retaining the whole power of the government in his hands, seems unworthy of the man who was the leader of the Reformation in Scot-

land, and professed an extraordinary regard for religion: it was cruel, selfish, and unprincipled. Nor is this all: making every allowance for the defective justice of the times, it is impossible to defend Moray's management of the evidence against Mary. There can be little doubt, I think, that some letters addressed by this unfortunate princess to Bothwell, did really fall into the hands of her enemies; but the regent's refusal to produce the originals to the accused, and the state in which the copies have descended to our times, evidently garbled, altered, and interpolated, throws on him the utmost suspicion, and renders it impossible for any sincere inquirer after the truth to receive such evidence. If the only proofs of Mary's guilt had been these letters produced at Westminster, the task of her defenders would have been comparatively an easy one.¹ It is the moral evidence arising out of her own conduct which weighs heaviest against her. But to return.

Upon the conclusion of the conferences, the Scottish queen exerted herself to rouse her partisans in Scotland, and animate them to a vindication of their independence against the practices of Elizabeth. Acting by the advice of Cecil, her chief minister, the Queen of England had formed a scheme by which, under the nominal regency of Moray, she would herself

¹ I have purposely abstained from quoting or entering into the arguments of the writers in the controversy which has arisen on the subject of these letters, and of Mary's guilt or innocence. My object has been to attempt, from original and unquestionable evidence, to give the facts; not to overload the narrative with argument or controversy. The reader who may wish to pursue the points farther, will find ample room for study in the volumes of Goodall, of Tytler, my venerated grandfather, of Laing, Whitaker, and Chalmers. Upon the whole, my grandfather's "Historical and Critical Inquiry," as it appears in the 4th edition, London, 1790, may still, I think, be appealed to, not only as the best defence of Mary, but, in a controversy which has been deformed by much coarse and bitter invective, as the most pleasing and elegant work which has appeared on the subject. It is, throughout, the production of a scholar and a gentleman.

have managed the whole affairs of the country. The project, drawn up in the handwriting of its astute author, still exists; the young prince was to be delivered up by Moray, and educated in England under the eye of Elizabeth; the regent was to be continued in his office, receiving, of course, his instructions from the Queen of England, on whom he was to be wholly dependent; and the Queen of Scots was to be persuaded to remain where she was by arguments which Cecil minutely detailed.¹ These insidious proposals were discovered by Mary, and being communicated to her friends, exaggerated by her fears and indignation, raised the utmost alarm in Scotland. The regent, it was said, had sold the country, he was ready to deliver up the principal fortresses, he had agreed to acknowledge the superiority of England, he looked himself to the throne, and was about to procure a deed of legitimation, by which he should be capable of succeeding if the young prince died without issue. Such reports flew from one end of the country to the other, and as he was not on the spot to contradict them, and cope with his adversaries, their effects were highly favourable to the captive queen.

In the meantime, although he had received permission to return to his government, Moray found himself very unpleasantly situated. He was deeply in debt, and although he had lent himself an easy tool in the hands of the Queen of England, she refused to assist him. If, indeed, we may believe Sir James Melvil, who had an intimate personal acquaintance with the history of these times, she really despised him for his subserviency, and enjoyed his distresses. This was not all: the Duke of Norfolk was enraged at his late conduct; he had broken all the promises made to this nobleman; and, as Norfolk commanded the whole strength of the northern counties, through which lay Moray's route homeward, he dreaded being way-laid be-

fore he crossed the Border. Nor was such an apprehension without good foundation, as a plot for his assassination, of which it is said both Norfolk and Mary were cognisant, was actually organised, and the execution of it committed to the Earl of Westmoreland.² Under these difficulties Moray had recourse to dissimulation. With much address he procured a reconciliation with Norfolk, expressed deep contrition for the part he had been compelled to act against his sovereign, and declared that his feelings upon the subject of the marriage between her and the duke remained unaltered: it was still his conviction, he said, that such a union would be eminently beneficial to both kingdoms, and he was ready to promote it by every means in his power. To prove his sincerity he opened the matter to the Bishop of Ross, he sent Robert Melvil to propose it to Mary herself, he promised to use his influence for its furtherance with the Scottish nobles, and in the end he so completely reassured the duke, that this nobleman procured the regent a loan of five thousand pounds from Elizabeth, and sent the strictest injunctions to his adherents not to molest him in any way upon his return.³

With Mary herself, his artifices did not stand him in less stead. Her friends in Scotland were at this time mustering in great strength. She had appointed the Duke of Chastelherault and the Earls of Argyle and Huntly her lieutenants. The two earls commanded the north; the Duke was ready to rise with the whole strength of the Hamiltons; Lord Boyd and other powerful nobles were preparing for action, and had these combined forces been brought into the field, Moray must have been overwhelmed. But at this crisis the queen and Norfolk were deceived by his professions of repentance; and Mary, trusting to his expressions of devotion to her interest, commanded her adherents to abstain from all hostilities. They reluctantly

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. i. fol. 273, 22d December 1568.

² Murdin's State Papers, p. 51.
³ Lesley's Negotiations in Anderson, vol. iii. p. 40.

obeyed, and the regent congratulating himself on his own address and the credulity of his opponents, returned secure and unmolested to his government.

On his arrival in Scotland Moray dropped the mask, and exerted himself with energy against his opponents. He held a convention of the nobility, clergy, and commissioners of the burghs at Stirling; he procured an approbation of his conduct, and a ratification of his proceedings in England; and lastly he gave orders for a general muster of the force of the kingdom.¹

On the other hand, the duke, Cassillis, and Lord Herries, as soon as they came home, assumed a bold tone; issued a proclamation, in which the regent was branded as a usurper; mustered their strength, fortified their houses, and shewed a determination to put all to the arbitrament of the sword. But the rapidity with which Moray assembled his army disconcerted them. It was evident, that although willing to enter into terms, he was better prepared than his opponents to act upon the offensive; and after a personal conference with the regent at Glasgow, (March 13,) they concluded a treaty of peace.² It was agreed that a convention of the nobility should be held upon the 10th of April for the settlement of the affairs of the country, and that in the mean season there should be a suspension of hostilities. Moray simply insisted that Chastelherault and his adherents should acknowledge the authority of the king. The duke agreed to this, on condition that all who had been forfeited for their obedience to the queen, should be restored, that such measures should be taken for the maintenance of her honour and welfare as were consistent with the sovereignty of the king, and

that a committee selected from the nobles on both sides should meet at Edinburgh to deliberate upon a general pacification. It embraced the regent himself, the duke, and the Earls of Huntly, Argyle, Morton, Mar, Athole, Glencairn, and Lord Herries. For his part, Moray stipulated that these noblemen should repair to Edinburgh and return to their estates in security, whilst they agreed to disband their forces and surrender themselves or their eldest sons as a security for the performance of the treaty.³

A temporary tranquillity being thus restored, the leaders of both parties repaired to Stirling, where the Archbishop of St Andrews, the Earl of Cassillis, and Lord Herries placed themselves in Moray's hands as hostages; and the regent, in return, released the prisoners taken at the battle of Langside. It was expected that he would next disband his force; but, seizing this moment of leisure, he led them against the Border marauders, who, from the long interruption of justice in these districts, were become formidable to both kingdoms. His expedition was successful, and it was a politic stroke, for it afforded him a good excuse for keeping up his forces, and it taught them confidence in themselves and their leader. When he returned to the capital, it was with spirits animated by victory, and with a secret determination never to lay down his arms till he had compelled his enemies to submit to such terms as he was pleased to dictate.

The 10th of April, being the day for the convention of the nobles, now arrived; and, according to agreement, the duke, Cassillis, Herries, and other nobles who composed the committee, (Huntly and Argyle excepted,) met at Edinburgh. Two points of much difficulty, and almost irreconcilable with each other, were to be settled—the continuance of the king's government, and the restoration and return of the captive queen; but Moray had no serious intention of entering into discussion upon either. When, there-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, 8th February 1568-9. Ibid., same to same, 17th February 1568-9. Ibid., same to same, 25th February 1568-9. Ibid., B.C., Moray to Sir John Forster, 15th March 1568-9.

² Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 141. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 13th March 1568-9. Heads of the communing between the Earl of Moray on the one part, and the Earl of Cassillis and others on the other part.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, March 15, 1568-9. Moray to Sir J. Forster

fore, the councillors were assembled, he rose, and haughtily handing a paper to the Duke of Chastelherault, desired him and his associates, before proceeding farther, to sign an acknowledgment of the king's authority. The duke remonstrated: the demand, he said, was unjust and premature, as the regent well knew. The object of this conference was to deliberate on the measures to be adopted towards their captive sovereign: let him propose such measures himself, or listen to him and his friends when they brought them forward. If both parties were agreed upon them, he and his adherents were ready to subscribe to the king's authority; they had observed every article of the late treaty; they had trusted themselves in the regent's power; their hostages were in his hands; their lives and their lands at his disposal; but they had relied upon his honour, most solemnly pledged and signed, nor could they believe that he would disgrace himself by an act of fraud and tyranny. To this spirited remonstrance Moray did not vouchsafe an answer, but ordered his guards instantly to apprehend the duke and Lord Herries. The last nobleman being the most formidable, was hurried a prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh without a moment's delay; the duke next morning shared the same fate.¹

This outrage was beheld with deep indignation by the country, and estranged from the regent some of his best friends; but it intimidated his opponents, and rendered Argyle and Huntly more inclined to an accommodation. These noblemen wielded the whole power of the northern districts, and had refused to sign the pacification at Glasgow. So deep was their enmity to Moray, that they had accused him in a public paper, presented during the conferences at Westminster, of being accessory to the murder of the king: and since that time they had left nothing undone to support

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 219. History of James the Sixth, pp. 39, 40. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Herries to Elizabeth, 5th July 1569.

the interests of their sovereign, and destroy the authority of the regent. But the late scenes in the capital had alarmed them; they saw him supported by England; at the head of a large force; his opponents in prison; the southern part of the kingdom reduced to obedience; and they deemed it prudent to enter into an accommodation. Argyle consented to acknowledge the king's authority, and was immediately received into favour. With Huntly, who had acted more independently for the queen, and granted commissions in her name, the arrangement was more difficult. But, at last, all was settled in a meeting at St Andrews, and the northern lord subscribed his adherence to the government, surrendered his artillery, and delivered hostages for his peaceable behaviour, (10th May.)² To secure his advantage, the regent immediately led his army into the north, reduced the country, levied heavy fines on all who had risen in favour of the queen, compelled the clans to swear allegiance, and returned, enriched and confident, to hold a great convention of the nobility, which he had appointed to meet at Perth on the 25th of July.³

To explain the object of this assembly, we must look back for a moment, and recall to mind the intrigues which had taken place between Moray, Lethington, and the Duke of Norfolk, to bring about a marriage between this nobleman and the Scottish queen. The project had originated in the busy and politic brain of Lethington, it had been encouraged and furthered by the regent, and its success was ardently anticipated by the duke, who carried on a correspondence with Moray upon the subject, and trusted in the end to procure the consent of his own sovereign. A secret of this kind, however, is difficult to keep in a court; and something coming to Elizabeth's ears, she broke forth with much passion, and attacked the duke, who saved him-

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Hunsdon to Cecil, May 19, 1569, and Spottiswood, p. 229.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Aberdeen, July 7, 1569.

self by his address. He would admit, he said, that proposals had been made to him on the subject by some noblemen. These he could not have prevented, but he had never seriously entertained them, and, indeed, he was not likely to do so, as he loved to sleep upon a safe pillow.¹ His earnestness reassured Elizabeth; and Norfolk, believing that he had lulled all her suspicions, had the rashness and folly to continue his correspondence with Mary.

After some time, the scheme assumed a definite form, and was secretly supported by a large party of the nobility in both countries. Leicester earnestly promoted it, the Earls of Arundel, Pembroke, Bedford, Shrewsbury, Northumberland, and Westmoreland gave it their full concurrence. Sir Nicholas Throckmorton laboured warmly in the cause; even the cautious Cecil, to whom it was early communicated, contributed his advice.²

In Scotland the plan was managed by Lethington, the regent, and his secretary Wood; whilst the Bishop of Ross and the Lord Boyd communicated with Mary, who corresponded with the duke, and professed her readiness to be divorced from Bothwell. Nothing, in short, was wanting, but the consent of Elizabeth and the concurrence of the Scottish nobility. To conciliate and convince the English queen, Leicester proposed that Lethington should repair to England. To insure the second, it was resolved that the matter should be brought before that convention of the whole nobility which was to meet at Perth on Moray's return from the north.

In the meantime, whilst these secret transactions were carefully concealed, the Bishop of Ross, who remained in England, carried on an open negotiation for his mistress's restoration. To this Elizabeth, with the desire of keeping a check over Moray,

affected to listen; and Lord Boyd was despatched with some proposals on this subject, to be communicated first to Mary herself, and afterwards, when she had given her consent, to be broken to the Scottish nobility. These articles, Camden affirms, were drawn up by Leicester.³ They stipulated that the Scottish queen, on condition of being reinstated in the government of her kingdom, should enter into a perpetual league with England, establish the Protestant religion, receive to favour her rebellious subjects, and give assurance to Elizabeth that neither she nor her issue should be molested by any claims upon the English throne. Another article was added on the marriage with Norfolk, but was carefully concealed from the English queen. It recommended this union as the only measure which was likely to restore tranquillity to both kingdoms; and to enforce it more effectually, Leicester and his friends despatched a special messenger, Mr Candish, who accompanied Lord Boyd to Tutbury, and carried letters and costly presents to Mary.⁴ To some of the conditions she immediately consented; to others she demurred, and requested time to consult her foreign allies; as to the projected marriage, her sorrowful experience, she said, inclined her to prefer a solitary life, yet if the remaining conditions were settled to her satisfaction, she was not indisposed to Norfolk, provided Elizabeth were consulted, and her consent obtained.⁵

On receiving this favourable reply, Norfolk became impatient to complete his ambitious project. He courted popularity, kept open house, strengthened himself by every possible means, and communicated his design to the French and Spanish ambassadors, who, after consulting their courts, gave him their encouragement and support. Nor did he neglect the Scottish regent, with whom he kept

¹ Trial of the Duke of Norfolk, Jardine, vol. i. p. 162.

² Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 51, 61, 62. Camden's Elizabeth, Kennet, vol. ii. p. 420.

³ Camden's Elizabeth. Kennet, vol. ii. p. 419-420.

⁴ Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 51, 52.

⁵ Ibid. pp. 53, 54.

up a close correspondence, and who assured him of his continued fidelity and devotion to his service. It may seem strange that Norfolk should have so long delayed to sound Elizabeth upon his great design, but Leicester, in whom he chiefly confided, strongly dissuaded him from any premature disclosure; and the deeper he and his confederates were engaged in their secret intrigues the more they shrank from the dreaded task of revealing them to a princess whose violence and severity held them in constant awe.

Meanwhile, though kept in the dark as to the marriage, the English queen was urged to conclude an agreement for the restoration of Mary, on the ground of those articles which had been submitted to her by the Bishop of Ross; and, after a conference with her privy-council, Lord Boyd was despatched upon this business into Scotland.¹ This nobleman carried with him letters to the regent from Elizabeth, Mary, the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir Nicholas Throckmorton; and, meeting Moray at Elgin, on his return from his northern expedition, he immediately laid before him his despatches and instructions.² The letters of Elizabeth contained three propositions on Mary's behalf, and she intimated her desire that one or the other of them should be adopted. She might be restored, she said, fully and absolutely to her royal estate; or, secondly, she might be united in the government with her son, and retain the title of queen, whilst the administration continued in the regent till the prince had attained the age of seventeen; or, lastly, she might return to Scotland, as a private person, and be honourably maintained in quiet and retirement. In Mary's own letter, which was brought by Lord Boyd, she briefly intimated her desire that judges should be appointed to decide upon the lawfulness of her marriage with Bothwell; and, should it be pronounced illegal, her request was that

sentence of nullity should be pronounced, so that she might be free to marry where she pleased. This request evidently pointed to the projected union with Norfolk, and the subject was insisted on in the letters of the duke himself and Sir N. Throckmorton. Norfolk, in addressing the regent, contented himself with warm professions of friendship, and assured him that, as to his marriage with the queen his sister, he never meant to recede from his promise, having proceeded so far that he could not go back without dishonour. He referred him to Lord Boyd, who was fully instructed by Mary and himself to reply to any doubts which he might entertain, and begged him to believe that he felt for him the affection not only of a faithful friend, but a natural brother.³

Throckmorton's letters were addressed both to Moray and to Lethington. To the regent he observed, that the time was come when he must give up all his conscientious scruples and objections; the match was now supported by a party too powerful and too numerous to be resisted; if he opposed it, his overthrow was inevitable; if he promoted it, no man's friendship would be so highly prized, no man's estimation be greater or more popular. In his letter to Lethington, Throckmorton urged the necessity of his hastening to court for the purpose of breaking the affair to Elizabeth. Of her consent, he said, he need have no doubt. She was too wise a princess to risk the tranquillity of her government, her own security, and the happiness of her people for the gratification of her own fancy, or the passions of any inconsiderate individual; and he concluded by assuring him that the wisest, noblest, and mightiest persons in England were all engaged upon their side.

On receiving these letters, the regent, as we have seen, summoned a convention of the nobility at Perth, on the 25th of July; an assembly of the Church was held at the same time in the capital, and commis-

¹ Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 54, 55.

² Ibid., p. 70.

³ Haynes, p. 520.

sioners deputed from it to the meeting of the nobles. It was impossible so acute a person as Moray should fail to perceive that the queen's restoration and the proposed marriage, if carried into effect, must be a death-blow to his power; and, whilst he affected to fulfil his engagements to the duke with scrupulous fidelity, he secretly persuaded his partisans to oppose the match with their utmost influence.¹

When Boyd delivered his letters at the convention, containing Elizabeth's three proposals, the effect of this disingenuous dealing was perceived: Mary's full restoration to her dignity was refused; her association with the young king in the government was also declared dangerous and impossible; but the third scheme for her restoration to liberty, and being reduced to a private condition within her dominions, appeared to them more likely to succeed. The assembly, however, arrived at no definite resolution; and when the queen's letter, regarding a divorce from Bothwell was laid before them a violent debate arose between Lethington and his friends, who secretly supported the intended marriage with Norfolk, and Makgill, the clerk-register, with the leaders of the Presbyterian party. It was argued by the secretary, between whom and Moray there had recently been great coldness, that the divorce might be concluded without injury or disrespect either to the king or the Church. To this Makgill answered, that Mary's own letters confuted him, and insulted their sovereign. The king was their only head and master, yet she still addressed them as her subjects, and subscribed herself their queen. The Bishop of St Andrews was a heretic, a member cut off from the true vine, an obstinate rebel and papist, yet she wrote to him as the head of the Church. To vouchsafe an answer to such an application would be, in some mea-

sure, to admit its justice; to grant it, nothing less than treason and blasphemy. It was in vain that Lethington attempted a reply, and sarcastically insinuated that they who were so recently anxious for the queen's separation from Bothwell had now altered their tone with unaccountable versatility. He was interrupted by Richardson, the treasurer, who started from his seat, calling the assembly to witness that the secretary had argued against the king's authority, and protested that any who dared to support him should be accounted traitors, and dealt with accordingly. This appeal finished the controversy, and Mary's proposal for a divorce was indignantly rejected.² The assembly then broke up with mutual expressions of contempt and defiance, the queen's deliverance appearing still more distant than before.

But if the affairs of this unfortunate princess were thus unsuccessful in her own dominions, an event which now happened in England overwhelmed her with fresh affliction. The renewed intrigues of the Duke of Norfolk were discovered, and Elizabeth's suspicions being once awakened, she never rested till, by the assistance of Cecil, her indefatigable and vigilant minister, the whole plot was unravelled.³ These discoveries were made when the duke scarcely suspected it, till he was awakened from his security by some dark speeches of the queen, who taunted him with his high hopes, and bade him beware on what pillow he leant his head.⁴ But this moderate tone of reprobation was short-lived, for on ascertaining the extent to which the plot had been carried under her own eye, by her principal nobility, and without a pretence of soliciting her consent, Elizabeth's fury was ungovernable. Leicester and his associates hastened to propitiate her resentment by a full discovery, and basely purchased their own security with the

¹ Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. ii.; p. 71. MS. State-paper Office. Names of the noblemen, &c., assembled at Perth, 28th July 1569.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Hunsdon to Cecil, Berwick, 5th August 1569. History of James the Sixth, p. 41.

³ Maitland, vol. ii. p. 1090.

⁴ Spottiswood, p. 231.

betrayal of Norfolk. His example was followed by Moray, who with equal meanness, on the first challenge of the English queen, delivered up the whole of his secret correspondence with Norfolk, and excused himself by declaring that a fear of assassination had compelled him to join a conspiracy of which he secretly disapproved.¹ He pleaded also, and with some reason, that Elizabeth's own conduct was enough to mitigate her resentment. If she had adopted a decided part against Mary, they would have known how to receive Norfolk's proposals; but her vacillating policy, and the favour with which the captive queen was treated, created, he said, an equal uncertainty in his mind, and that of his supporters.²

As for the unfortunate duke himself, he appears to have acted with that indecision which, in matters of this kind, and with such an adversary as Elizabeth, is commonly fatal. His friends admonished him to throw off the mask and take the field at once, and had he followed their advice his popularity was so great that the consequences might have been serious; but he rejected their advice, and in an apology addressed to the queen, assured her that it had been his fixed resolution throughout the whole course of the negotiations never to marry the Queen of Scots without the consent of his sovereign. His guilt lay in the delay, but his allegiance was untainted, and his devotion to her service as entire as it had always been. This letter was sent from Kenninghall, his seat in Norfolk, to which he had precipitately retired on his first suspicion of a discovery. Elizabeth's reply was an immediate summons to the court. The duke did not venture to obey without first consulting Cecil. The secretary assured him that he was safe. He complied, and was instantly arrested and lodged in the Tower.³

The discovery was followed by a

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil. Hawick, 22d October 1569, Trial of the Duke of Norfolk, in Jardine, vol. i. pp. 157-160.

² Ibid., Dumfries, 29th October 1569.

³ Haynes, pp. 528, 533.

more rigorous confinement of the Scottish queen, who was now removed from Winkfield to Tutbury; her repositories were ransacked for letters; and she was committed to the custody of the Earl of Huntingdon, a nobleman particularly obnoxious to her, who was associated in this charge with Shrewsbury, her former keeper.⁴ Her most trusty domestics were dismissed, the number of her attendants diminished, her letters intercepted and conveyed to the Queen of England, and all her actions so rigorously watched, that it became impossible for her to communicate even in the most common affairs with her friends.⁵

Nothing can more strongly mark the sudden and extraordinary changes of these times than an event which soon after occurred in Scotland—the arraignment of Lethington. The regent, since the discovery of his intrigues with Norfolk, had fallen into suspicion with Elizabeth. His secretary Wood, also, who had been intrusted with his negotiations at the English court, by his duplicity and false dealing, had incurred her resentment; and although Moray hastened to appease her, by a delivery of the letters which convicted the duke, she was aware that Lethington still intrigued upon the subject, and suspected that the regent, from their long habits of intimacy, might be induced to favour his designs. Her fears, indeed, on this point proved to be unfounded, for Moray, as we learn from Melvil, had recently forsaken his old friends, and suffered himself to be surrounded by a circle of base and needy parasites. But of this estrangement Elizabeth was ignorant. She therefore directed Cecil to keep a vigilant eye upon the operations of the regent; Lord Hunsdon, the governor of Berwick, received the same instructions; the proceedings of the convention at Perth, and the subsequent conduct of the Scottish governor, were severely criticised; and Moray found, to his mortification, that whilst he had incurred extreme

⁴ Haynes, p. 526, 527.

⁵ Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 78.

odium by the betrayal of Norfolk, he was himself an object of suspicion.

Whilst Elizabeth, however, only suspected Moray, she was incensed to the highest degree against Lethington, whom she now discovered to be the originator of the marriage plot and the greatest partisan of Norfolk. This restless and indefatigable politician, since his unsuccessful efforts in the convention at Perth, had sought security in Athole, where he was surrounded by his friends, and continued to incite them to renew their exertions in favour of the Scottish queen; and Moray, who, like other victims of ambition, had become sufficiently unscrupulous in the means which he adopted to consolidate his power, resolved to recommend himself to Elizabeth by the ruin of his former associate.

Under the pretence of requiring his immediate assistance at Stirling, in the business of the government, he requested the secretary to leave his retreat in Athole and return to court. Suspicious of some intrigue, he obeyed with reluctance, and scarce had he taken his seat at council, which was attended by Moray, Mar, Morton, Athole, and Semple, when word was brought that Crawford, a gentleman from the Earl of Lennox, requested audience on business of moment. He was admitted, and falling down on his knees, demanded justice to be done on William Maitland of Lethington, and Sir James Balfour, as the murderers of their sovereign.¹ Amongst the councillors, the only one who heard this sudden accusation unmoved was the secretary himself. With a smile of calm contempt he observed, that his long-continued services might have exempted him from so foul and false a charge, preferred, too, by so mean a person; but he was ready to find surety to stand his trial on any day which was appointed, and he had no fears for the verdict. Crawford, however, still kneeling, warmly remonstrated against his being left at large. He, a gentleman, and a servant of the late

king,² had publicly arraigned that guilty man of treason; he was ready to prosecute and adduce his proofs, and under such circumstances he appealed to the council whether bail could possibly be accepted. After a violent debate it was determined that the secretary should be committed; and Moray, who secretly congratulated himself on the issue of his intrigue, carried him to the capital, and confined him in the house of Forrester, one of his own dependants. At the same time a party of horse were despatched to Fife, who surrounded Balfour's residence at Monimail, and brought him and his brother George prisoners to Edinburgh.³

The arrest of Lethington increased the unpopularity of the regent; but his victim had scarcely fallen into his hands ere he was again torn from him; for the secretary's old associate, Grange, dreading some new treachery of Moray and Morton, now closely leagued together, attacked the house in which he was confined, and, by a mixture of stratagem and courage,⁴ carried him off in triumph to the castle. This rescue deeply mortified Moray, who believed that in securing Lethington he was not only performing an acceptable service to Elizabeth, but removing the most formidable opponent of his own government. He dissembled his indignation, however; and as the secretary still declared his readiness to answer the accusation, contented himself with appointing the 22d of November as the day of trial.

Meanwhile, England became disturbed by a rebellion in the northern counties, which at first assumed a formidable appearance. Its leaders were the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, its object no less than the restoration of the Roman Catholic faith, the destruction of the Pro-

² *Supra*, p. 235.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Stirling, September 5th, 1569. Also, Lord Hunsdon to Cecil, Alnwick, September 8th, 1569. *Diurnal of Occurrents*, pp. 147-148.

⁴ Melvil's *Memoirs*, p. 218. It is stated by Robert Melvil that Grange, to forward his purpose, forged an order under the handwriting of the regent. MS. Declaration of Robert Melvil in the Hopetoun Papers.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Hunsdon to Cecil, Newcastle, September 7th, 1569. *Diurnal of Occurrents*, pp. 147, 148.

testant constitution of that country, and the delivery of the Scottish queen. So imminent did the danger at first appear, that Elizabeth issued an order under the great seal for Mary's execution, which seems only to have been arrested by the sudden and total failure of the insurrection.¹ It arose from the intrigues of the Duke of Norfolk and the hopes excited amongst the English Catholics by the anticipated restoration of Mary. Amongst Norfolk's most powerful friends were the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, two peers of ancient lineage, powerful connexions, and steady attachment to the Church of Rome. They commanded the strength of the northern counties; and had Norfolk chosen to have bid defiance to Elizabeth, they were ready to have risen in arms in his defence. His submission and imprisonment broke, but did not put an end to, their intrigues; and, irritated at his desertion, they sought the support of the king of Spain, and secured the services of the Duke of Alva and the Bishop of Ross.

This prelate, a man of great talents and restless intrigue, was the ambassador and confidential minister of the Scottish queen, and by his secret negotiations, his mistress, who in her first imprisonment at Bolton had kept up a correspondence with Northumberland,² became involved in these new commotions. Alva promised to assist the two earls with a large body of men, and sent over the Marquis Vitelli, one of his best officers, under the pretence of a mission to Elizabeth, but really to forward the rebellion. Before, however, these preparations were completed, Elizabeth obtained a knowledge of the plot, and instantly summoned both to court. Whilst they hesitated, intelligence arrived that Sussex, the queen's lieutenant in the north, had received orders to arrest them; and scarce was this message delivered when Northumberland's castle was beset by a body of horse.

¹ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXIII. Letter of Leicester to Cecil, communicated by Mr Bruce.

² Haynes, pp. 594, 595.

He escaped with difficulty, joined the Earl of Westmoreland, and, as the only chance now left them, they dropped the mask and broke into rebellion. An enterprise thus prematurely forced on could scarcely be successful. In their proclamation the two earls professed a devoted attachment to the queen's person, and declared their only object to be the restoration of the faith of their fathers, the dismissal of false councillors, and the liberation of Norfolk. They had confidently looked to being joined by the large body of the English Roman Catholics all over the country, but their utmost strength never amounted to six thousand men, and these soon melted away into a more insignificant force. Sir John Forster, the Warden of the Middle Marches, made himself master of Northumberland's castles of Alnwick and Warkworth, and by taking possession of the principal passes, effectually cut off all communication between the earl and his vassals in those parts. Thence marching to Newcastle, and being joined by Sir Henry Percy, Northumberland's brother, he speedily reduced the rebels in the northern parts of Durham, so that when Sussex took the field with seven thousand men, the rebellion was already expiring.³

The two rebel earls, with a force which diminished every hour, retired first upon Hexham, and afterwards fell back upon Naworth castle, in Cumberland. Here they suddenly dispersed their little army, and fled with a handful of horse into Scotland. Westmoreland took refuge with the Lairds of Buccleuch and Fernyhurst, two of the most powerful chiefs in those parts; whilst Northumberland, in company with black Ormiston, a traitor who was present at the king's murder, the Laird's Jock, and other Border banditti, threw himself into the Harlaw, a stronghold of the Armstrongs.⁴ These events passed with

³ Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 52, 58. Camden, in Kennet, vol. ii. pp. 421, 422.

⁴ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Instructions for Mr George Cary. Signed by Sussex, Hunsdon, and Sadler, 22d December 1569. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office,

so much rapidity, that Moray, who, on the first intelligence of the insurrection, had professed his readiness to assist Elizabeth with the whole forces of the realm, was scarcely able to muster his strength before he heard that assistance was unnecessary.¹

From such commotions in England, so intimately connected with the fortunes of the captive queen, we must turn to the condition of her partisans in her own country. Of these the great leaders were Lethington and Grange. Grange was in possession of the castle of Edinburgh, within which now lay his friend Lethington, Lord Herries, the Archbishop of St Andrews, and others who supported the cause of Mary, professing at the same time their attachment to their prince, and an earnest desire for the pacification of the country.

Opposed to them was the regent, supported by England and the party of the Kirk, who kept up a constant correspondence with Cecil, Elizabeth's minister, and whose measures were entirely dictated and overruled by English influence.

Since his accession to the chief power in the state, but more especially since the termination of the conferences at Westminster, Moray's popularity had been on the decline. Men blamed his conduct to his sovereign, his treachery to his associates, his haughtiness to his own countrymen, his humility and subserviency to a foreign Power, as England was then considered. They accused him of being surrounded by troops of low and needy flatterers, who prospered upon the ruin of the ancient nobility, and persuaded him to betray his former friends, by whose efforts he had been placed in the regency. They declared, and with some truth, that having once sold himself to England, he had become insensible to every suggestion of

copy of the time, Moray to Sussex, Peebles, 22d December 1569.

¹ For a more detailed and interesting account of this insurrection in 1569, the reader is referred to a valuable work recently published by my respected friend Sir Cuthbert Sharpe, entitled, "Memorials of the Rebellion of 1569." Nichols: London, 1840.

honour and good faith. Hence his betrayal of Norfolk, his imprisonment of Herries and the Duke of Chastelherault, his treacherous accusation of Lethington, his threatened severity to Northumberland,—all this weighed strongly against him; and those who had been most willing to anticipate the happiest results from his administration were now ready to acknowledge their mortification and disappointment.² Yet, although thus fallen in public estimation, and surrounded by enemies, Moray, naturally daring and intrepid, shewed no symptoms of decreasing energy; and as the time approached when Lethington was to stand his trial for the murder of the king, he appeared fully determined to insist on the prosecution.

When the day arrived, however, a scene presented itself very different from the pacific solemnities of public justice. Lord Home, at an early hour, occupied the city with a large body of horse. He was speedily followed by multitudes of the secretary's friends, all armed and surrounded by their retainers; and as every hour was increasing the concourse, Morton, a principal accuser of Lethington, refused to risk his person within the city. Amidst this warlike concourse, Clement Little, an able advocate of the time, entered where the council had assembled, and protested that, as his client, the secretary, was ready to stand his trial, and no prosecutor had appeared, he was entitled to a verdict of acquittal. Moray, however, who had taken care to be strongly guarded, rose up, and declared that as long as the town was occupied by armed troops no trial should take place, and no verdict be pronounced. He had been placed, he said, by their unsolicited suffrages in the first office in the state; he had given his solemn oath to administer justice; they had promised to obey the king, and assist him in maintaining the law. What, then, meant this armed assembly? Was it thus that they fulfilled their promise? or did they think to intimidate him into their opinion? That,

² Melville's Memoirs, p. 220.

at least, he should shew them was a vain expectation; and therefore he now prorogued the trial till quiet was restored, and they were prepared, having laid aside their arms, to resume the demeanour of peaceable subjects. Such was Moray's speech, as reported by himself in a letter written next day to Cecil; but we learn, from the same source, that the regent was daily expecting a communication from Elizabeth, containing her instructions how to conduct himself in Lethington's case, and that he delayed the trial to give time for their arrival—an additional proof of his entire subserviency to England.¹

He concluded the same letter by an allusion to the recent rebellion in the north. "I have offered," said he, "already to Mr Marshal of Berwick [he meant Sir William Drury] to take such part in her highness's cause and quarrel with the whole power of this realm, that will do for me, as he shall advertise me; . . . and since the matter not only touches her highness's obedience, but that we may see our own destruction compassed, who are professors of the gospel, let not time drive, but with speed let us understand her majesty's mind."²

Moray followed up this offer by summoning the whole force of the kingdom to meet him in arms at Peebles on the 20th December, for the defence of their native country, the preservation of their wives and children, and the liberty of the true religion.³ He had received early intelligence from Sussex of the flight of the rebel earls into Scotland, and immediately despatched messengers to the seaports to keep a strict look-out, lest any should take shipping and escape. But his chief reliance lay in his own activity; and marching rapidly towards Hawick, he beset the Harlaw, a

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Edinburgh, 22d Nov. 1569, endorsed in Cecil's hand, "Earl of Murray to me, concerning the day of law for Lydington."

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Edinburgh, 22d November 1569.

³ MS., State-paper office, copy, the Regent's Proclamation, Edinburgh, 18th December 1569.

tower in which Northumberland had found shelter from Hecky, or Hector Armstrong, a Border thief. This villain, bribed by the regent's gold, sold the English earl to Moray, who carried him to Edinburgh, and soon after imprisoned him in Lochleven.⁴

Although this new act of severity and corruption increased the regent's unpopularity in Scotland, it being suspected that he meant to give up his captive to Elizabeth, his zeal and activity completely restored him to the good opinion of this princess, and he had the satisfaction to learn that she had warmly commended him to his ambassador, the Abbot of Dunfermline. This emboldened him to make a proposal on which he had long meditated, and for which the English queen was by no means prepared. It was no less than that she should surrender Mary into his hands to be kept safely in Scotland, a solemn promise being given by him, "that she should live her natural life, without any sinister means taken to shorten the same."⁵ It was added that a maintenance suitable to her high rank should be provided for her; and the arguments addressed to Elizabeth upon the subject, in a paper intrusted to Nicholas Elphinston, who was sent with the request to the English court, were drawn up with no little art and ability. After an enumeration of the late miseries and commotions in England, it stated, that "as Mary was notoriously the ground and fountain from whom all these tumults, practices, and daily dangers did flow," and as her remaining within the realm of England undoubtedly gave her every opportunity to continue them, there was no more certain means to provide

⁴ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 154. Lesley's Negotiations, p. 83. Anderson, vol. iii. Hence a Border proverb, "To take Hecky's cloak," to betray a friend. Percy's Reliques, vol. i. p. 3, song iv.

⁵ Copy of the "Instrument," MS., State-paper Office, but without date. On the back are these names, in Cecil's hand,

Er: MURRAY,	Er: MARSHALL, M.
MORTON,	Lr: LYNDSAY,
MARÉ,	RUTHVEN,
GLENCAIRN,	SIMPLE.
MONTROSE, M.	

a remedy, and bring quiet to both countries, than to bring her back into Scotland, thus removing her to a greater distance from foreign realms, and daily intelligence with their princes or their ambassadors."¹

In this petition Moray was joined by Morton, Mar, Glencairn, Lords Lindsay, Ruthven, and Semple, with the Masters of Marshal and Montrose. At the same time Knox addressed a letter to Cecil. He described himself as writing with one foot in the grave, alluded to the late rebellion, and recommended him to strike at the root, meaning Mary, if he would prevent the branches from budding again. It appears to me that the expressions of this great Reformer, whose stern spirit was little softened by age, go as far as to urge the absolute necessity of putting Mary to death; but his words are somewhat dark and enigmatical. The letter, which is wholly in his own hand, is too remarkable to be omitted.

"Benefits of God's hands received, crave that men be thankful, and danger known would be avoided. If ye strike not at the root, the branches that appear to be broken will bud again, and that more quickly than men can believe, with greater force than we would wish. Turn your een² unto your God: forget yourself and yours, when consultation is to be had in matters of such weight as presently upon you. Albeit I have been fremely³ handled, yet was I never enemy to the quietness of England. God grant you wisdom. In haste, of⁴ Edinburgh, the second of Janur. Yours to command in God,

"John Knox, with his one foot
in the grave.⁵

"Mo⁶ days than one would not suffice to express what I think."

Moray despatched Elphinston on the 2d of January, and as Knox's

¹ MS. Copy of the "Instrument," State-paper Office, ut supra.

² Eyes.

³ Strangely.

⁴ At.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, John Knox to Cecil, Edinburgh, 2d January 1569-70. Endorsed by Cecil's clerk, "Mr Knox to my Mr."

⁶ More.

letter was dated on the same day, and related to the same subject, it is probable he carried it with him.⁷ The envoy, who was in great confidence with the regent, and a man of talent, received full instructions for his secret mission, which fortunately have been preserved. He was directed to impress upon Elizabeth, in the strongest manner, the difficulties with which Moray was surrounded; the daily increasing power of his and her enemies, who supported the cause of the captive queen both in England and Scotland; the perpetual tumults and intrigues of the Spanish faction of the Catholics in England, and their brethren of the same faith in Scotland; their intercourse with Philip of Spain and the Pope, who were animating them at that very moment to new exertions; the succours hourly looked for from France; and the utter impossibility of the regent keeping up the struggle against his opponents, if Mary was permitted to remain in England, and Elizabeth did not come forward with more prompt and effectual assistance.

It was necessary, he said, to prevent the ruin of the cause, that the Queen of England and his master should distinctly understand each other. She had lately urged him to deliver up her rebel the Earl of Northumberland, to pay the penalty of a traitor. It was a hard request, and against every feeling of honour and humanity, to surrender a banished man to slaughter; but he was ready to consent, if, in exchange, the Queen of Scots were committed into his hands, and if, at the same time, Elizabeth would support the cause of his young sovereign, and the interests of true religion, by an immediate advance of money, and a seasonable present of arms and ammunition.⁸ If this were agreed to, then he was ready to continue his efforts for the maintenance of the government in Scotland against the

⁷ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, January 2, 1569-70.

⁸ MS., State-paper Office, a Note of the principal matters in Nicholas Elphinston's Instructions. Wholly in Cecil's hand. January 19, 1569-70.

machinations of their enemies; he would not only preserve her amity, but "would serve her majesty in England, as they are accustomed to do their native princes in Scotland, and out of England, upon reasonable wages." If she would not consent to this, then he must forbear any longer to venture his life as he had done; and it would be well for her to consider what dangers might ensue to both the realms by the increase of the factions which favoured Papistry and the Queen of Scots' title. Above all, he entreated her to remember, (alluding, as it appears to me, to the subject of Knox's letter,) that the heads of all these troubles were at her commandment; that this late rebellion was not now ended, but had more dangerous branches, for which, if she did not provide a remedy, the fault must lie upon herself.¹

These secret negotiations were detected by the vigilance of the Bishop of Ross, and he instantly presented a protest to the Queen of England against a proposition which, if agreed to, was, he said, equivalent to signing Mary's death-warrant. He solicited also the ambassadors of France and Spain to remonstrate against it, and La Motte Fenelon addressed an earnest letter to the queen-mother upon the subject.² Some little time, too, was gained by the refusal of the Scottish nobles to deliver up Northumberland, and Elizabeth had despatched Sir Henry Gates and the Marshal of Berwick with a message to the regent, when an appalling event suddenly interrupted the treaty. This was the murder of Moray himself in the town of Linlithgow, by James Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh.

The assassination is to be chiefly traced to the influence of private revenge; but there is no doubt, also, that the author of the deed was the tool of a faction which had long determined on Moray's destruction. He

¹ MS., State-paper Office, a Note of the principal matters in Nicholas Elphinston's Instructions, January 19, 1569-70.

² Lesley's Negotiations, p. 84. Anderson, vol. iii. Also, *Dépêches De la Motte Fenelon*, vol. ii. pp. 389, 390.

was a gentleman of good family, had been made prisoner at Langside, and with others was condemned to death; but the regent had spared his life, and been satisfied with the forfeiture of his estate.

His wife was heiress of Woodhouselee, a small property on the river Esk, to which she had retreated, under the mistaken idea that it would be exempted from the sentence of outlawry, which affected her husband's estate of Bothwellhaugh. But Bellenden, the justice-clerk, a favourite of Moray's, who had obtained a grant of the escheat,³ violently occupied the house, and barbarously turned its mistress, during a bitterly cold night, and almost in a state of nakedness, into the woods, where she was found in the morning furiously mad, and insensible to the injury which had been inflicted on her. If ever revenge could meet with sympathy, it would be in so atrocious a case as this; and from that moment Bothwellhaugh resolved upon Moray's death, accusing him as the chief author of the calamity. It is affirmed by Calderwood, that he had twice failed in his sanguinary purpose, when the Hamiltons, who had long hated the regent, encouraged him to make a third attempt, which proved successful.⁴

Nothing could be more deliberate than the manner in which he proceeded. Moray, who was at Stirling, intended to pass through Linlithgow, on his way to Edinburgh. In this town, and in the High Street, through which the cavalcade generally passed, was a house belonging to the archbishop, uncle to Bothwellhaugh. Here the assassin took his station in a small room, or wooden gallery, which commanded a full view of the street. To prevent his heavy footsteps being heard, for he was booted and spurred, he placed a feather bed on the floor; to secure against any chance observation of his shadow, which, had the sun broke out, might have caught the eye, he hung up a black

³ The forfeited property.

⁴ MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4735, pp. 746, 747.

cloth on the opposite wall; and, having barricaded the door in the front, he had a swift horse ready saddled in the stable at the back. Even here his preparations did not stop, for, observing that the gate in the wall which enclosed the garden was too low to admit a man on horseback, he removed the lintel stone, and returning to his chamber, cut in the wooden panel, immediately below the lattice window where he watched, a hole just sufficient to admit the barrel of his caliver.¹ Having taken these precautions, he loaded the piece with four bullets, and calmly awaited his victim.

The regent had received repeated warnings of his danger; and, on the morning of the murder, John Hume, an attached follower, implored him not to ride through the principal street, but pass round by the back of the town, promising to bring him to the very spot where they might seize the villain who lay in wait for him.² He agreed to take his advice; but the crowd of the common people was so great, that it became impossible for him to alter his course. The same cause compelled him to ride at a slow pace, so that the assassin had time to take a deliberate aim; and as he passed the fatal house, he shot him right through the lower part of the body: the bullet entering above the belt of his doublet, came out near the hipbone, and killed the horse of Arthur Douglas, who rode close beside him.³ The very suddenness and success of this atrocious action produced a horror and confusion which favoured the murderer's escape; and, mounting his horse, with the weapon of his revenge still warm in his grasp, he was already many miles from the spot; whilst the people, infuriated at the sight of their bleeding governor, were in vain attempting to break open the door of the lodging from which

the shot proceeded. A few, however, caught a sight of him as he fled, and, giving chase, observed that he took the road to Hamilton.⁴ Here he was received in triumph by the Archbishop of St Andrews, the Lord Arbroath, of whom Bothwellhaugh was a retainer, and the whole faction of the Hamiltons. They instantly assembled in arms, declared Scotland once more free from the thralldom of an ambitious tyrant, who had been cut off at the very moment when he was plotting against the life of his sovereign; and resolved instantly to proceed to Edinburgh, to join with Grange, liberate their chief the Duke of Chastelherault, and follow up the advantage they had won.⁵

All these events took place with a startling rapidity, of which the slow progress of written description can convey but a faint idea: in the meantime the unhappy regent, though bleeding profusely, had strength enough to walk to the palace, where at first the surgeons gave hopes of his recovery. Mortal symptoms, however, soon appeared, and when made acquainted with them, he received the information with his usual calm demeanour. When his friends bitterly lamented his fate, remarking that he might long since have taken the miscreant's life, and observing that his clemency had been his ruin, Moray mildly answered, that they would never make him repent of any good he had done in his life; and after faintly, but affectionately, commanding the charge of the young prince to such of the nobility as were present, he died tranquilly a little before midnight.⁶

I will not attempt any laboured character of this extraordinary man, who, coming into the possession of almost uncontrolled power, as the leader of the reformed party, when he was little more than a youth, was cut off in the midst of his greatness be-

¹ History of King James the Sixth, p. 46.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Copy endorsed by Hunsdon himself. Hunsdon to Elizabeth, Berwick, 30th January 1569-70.

³ Ibid., 24th January, 1569-70. Also, Ibid., 26th January 1569-70.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Copy endorsed by Hunsdon himself. Hunsdon to Elizabeth, Berwick, 30th January 1569-70.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, Information anent the Punishment of the Regent's Murder.

⁶ Spottiswood, p. 233.

fore he was forty years old.¹ Living in those wretched times, when the country was torn by two parties which mortally hated each other, he has come down to us so disfigured by the prejudices of his contemporaries, that it is difficult to discern his true features. As to his personal intrepidity, his talents for state affairs, his military capacity, and the general purity of his private life, in a corrupt age and court, there can be no difference of opinion. It has been recorded of him, that he ordered himself and his family in such sort, that it did more resemble a church than a court;² and it is but fair to conclude that this proceeded from his deep feelings of religion, and a steady attachment to a reformation which he believed to be founded on the Word of God. But, on the other hand, there are some facts, especially such as occurred during the latter part of his career, which throw suspicion upon his motives, and weigh heavily against him. He consented to the murder of Riccio : to compass his own return to power, he unscrupulously leagued himself with men whom he knew to be the murderers of the king; used their evidence to convict his sovereign; and refused to turn against them till they began to threaten his power, and declined to act as the tools of his ambition. If we regard private faith and honour, how can we defend his betrayal of Norfolk, and his consent to deliver up Northumberland? If we look to love of country, a principle now, perhaps, too lightly esteemed, but inseparable from all true greatness, what are we to think of his last

ignominious offers to Elizabeth? If we go higher still, and seek for that love which is the only test of religious truth, how difficult is it to think that it could have a place in his heart, whose last transaction went to aggravate the imprisonment, if not to recommend the death, of a miserable princess, his own sister and his sovereign.

All are agreed that he was a noble-looking personage, of grave and commanding manners. His funeral, which was a solemn spectacle, took place on the 14th of February, in the High Church of St Giles, at Edinburgh, where he was buried in St Anthony's aisle. The body had been taken from Linlithgow to Stirling, and thence was transported by water to Leith, and carried to the palace of Holyrood. In the public procession to the church it was accompanied by the magistrates and citizens of Edinburgh, who greatly lamented him. They were followed by the gentlemen of the country, and these by the nobility. The Earls of Morton, Mar, Glencairn, and Cassillis, with the Lords Glammis, Lindsay, Ochiltree, and Ruthven, carried the body; before it came the Lairds of Grange, and Colvil of Cleish; Grange bearing his banner, with the royal arms, and Cleish his coat armour. The servants of his household followed, making great lamentation, as Randolph, an eye-witness, wrote to Cecil. On entering the church the bier was placed before the pulpit, and Knox preached the sermon, taking for his text, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."³

¹ He was born in 1530, and slain in 1569-70.
² Spottiswood, p. 233.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, 22d Feb. 1569-70. *Diarium of Occurrents*, p. 158.

CHAPTER X.

INTERREGNUM—REGENCIES OF LENNOX AND MAR.

1570—1572.

THE death of Moray was a serious blow to Elizabeth. Its consequences threatened to unite closely the party which favoured the restoration of Mary, and were solicitous for a general pacification. The Hamiltons, Lethington, Herries, Huntly, and Argyle had vigorously resisted the measures of the regent, and felt impatient under the ascendancy of English influence, which Moray, Morton, and their faction had introduced. That “inestimable commodity,”¹ an English party in Scotland, which Elizabeth’s ministers described as having been so difficult to attain, and so invaluable in its effects, was now threatened with destruction; and Lord Hunsdon, the very day after Moray’s death, wrote in anxious terms, requiring the queen’s immediate attention to the state of Scotland. Important matters, he said, depended, and would fall out by this event, and much vigilance would be required to watch “the great faction which remained, who were all French.”²

Nor were these apprehensions exaggerated. If Elizabeth looked to her own realm, it was full of discontented subjects, and on the very eve of another rebellion. If to Scotland, Mary’s adherents were in a state of high elatedness and hope;³ the Hamiltons had already taken arms, the castles of Edinburgh and Dumbarton were in the hands of her friends, succours had arrived in the Clyde from France;

¹ Anderson’s Collections, vol. iv. part i. p. 104.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Hunsdon to Cecil, January 24, 1569-70.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Hunsdon to Cecil, Berwick, January 30, 1569-70. Also, Ibid., Information anent the Punishment of the Regent’s Murder.

and, on the morning after the regent’s death, Scott of Buccleuch, and Ker of Fernyhirst, two of the mightiest of the Border chiefs, broke into England, and in a destructive “rajd” let loose their vengeance. In their company was Nevil, the banished Earl of Westmoreland, a rough soldier and devoted friend of Mary, who, as Hunsdon wrote Cecil, had testified his joy on hearing of Moray’s death by casting his hat into the fire—replacing it, no doubt, by a steel bonnet.

All this was ground for much anxiety at home, and the prospect was not more encouraging abroad. In France the news of Moray’s assassination produced a paroxysm of joy, and was followed by active preparations to follow up the advantage.⁴ In Spain no less interest was felt; and at that moment Douglas, a messenger from the Duke of Alva, employed by the Bishop of Ross, was in Scotland. He had brought letters to the friends of Mary, sewed under the buttons of his coat, had twice supplied them with money, and warmly exhorted them to keep up the contest until assistance arrived from Philip.⁵

These were all alarming indications, and the papers of Elizabeth’s vigilant and indefatigable minister, Cecil, contain ample proof that he was not insensible to the importance of the crisis. In an able but somewhat Machiavelian memorial on the state of the realm, drawn up on the very eve of Moray’s murder, and the argu-

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Norris to Cecil, February 17, 1569-70, Angiers. Ibid., Norris to Cecil, February 25, 1569-70.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Cecil, January 26, 1569-70.

ments in which were greatly strengthened by that event,¹ he stated the perils both in respect of persons and matters to be many, great, and imminent; pointed out the increasing strength of the Romish party all over Europe; the decay and probable extinction of the Protestant power in France and Flanders; the weakening of all those counter forces which his mistress had hitherto been successful in raising against it; and the well-known resolution of the court of Rome, and the three great powers of Spain, Austria, and France, never to intermit their efforts until they had destroyed England, and placed its crown upon the head of the Scottish queen. In the same paper he called her attention to that unceasing encouragement to intrigue and rebellion which was held out by Mary's presence in England, and the growing unanimity and power of her party at home.

All this, it was evident, called for immediate exertion; and, in Cecil's opinion, there was but one way to provide a remedy, or at least to arrest the evil in its progress. Scotland was the field on which Elizabeth's domestic and foreign enemies were uniting against her. The strength of that country lay in the union of its various factions, which previous to Moray's death had been nearly accomplished by the efforts of Lethington and Grange, and which this event threatened to accelerate. Her policy, then, must be, to prevent a pacification, keep up an English party, and find her own peace in the dissensions and misery of her neighbour. For this end two instruments were necessary, and must instantly be procured: the first an ambassador, who, under the mask of a peacemaker, might sow the seeds of disquiet and confusion; the second, a regent, who would submit to her dictation. She found the one in Sir Thomas Randolph, an accomplished master in political intrigue, whom she despatched to Scotland only three days after the death of Moray.²

¹ Haynes, p. 579.

² MS. Letter, draft, State-paper Office,

For the second, she chose the Earl of Lennox, father of the unhappy Darnley, who had long been a pensioner upon her bounty, and whose moderate abilities and pliant disposition promised the subserviency which she wished.

Immediately after the regent's death, this nobleman had addressed a "supplication" to Elizabeth, representing the great danger in which it left the infant king, his grandson, her majesty's near kinsman, and suggesting the propriety of extending her protection to the "little innocent," by getting him delivered into her own hands.³ This had been always a favourite project of the queen's, and disposed her to think favourably of Lennox; but another cause recommended him still more strongly: there had long existed a deadly hatred between the two great houses of Hamilton and Lennox, and no more effectual method to kindle a flame in Scotland could have been adopted, than the elevation of this nobleman to the first rank in the government.⁴

In the meantime Elizabeth received a letter from Lord Hunsdon, the governor of Berwick, which in some degree quieted her apprehensions, and gave her better hopes than he had at first held out. A week after the regent's murder, the Earl of Morton requested a meeting at Edinburgh with Sir Henry Gates and Sir William Drury, who had come to Scotland on a mission to the regent, and were in that country when he died. It was held in Gate's lodging; and there, besides Morton, the envoy met Grange, Lindsay, Sir James Balfour, Makgill the justice-clerk, Bellenden the clerk-register, with the lairds of Pitarrow and Tullibardine.

The conference was opened by Mak-

entirely in Cecil's hand. Minute of the Queen's majesty's letter, January 29, 1569-70. Melvil's Memoirs, p. 227; also 230, 231. "He," (Randolph) says the author, "was deliberately directed secretly to kindle a fire of discord between the twa stark factions in Scotland, quhilke could not be easily quenched."

³ Haynes, p. 576.

⁴ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 227.

gill, who assured the English envoys of their continued devotion to Elizabeth; and betrayed an evident terror lest she should set their queen at liberty and send her home amongst them. They spoke of an approaching convention of the nobility, but declared, that if the Queen of England would accept their services, secure their religion, and aid them to resist the intrusion of foreigners, they would run with her the same course which Moray had done, and decide on nothing till they knew her pleasure: as to a regent, her majesty would do well, they said, to think of the Earl of Lennox, a Stewart by birth, a Douglas by marriage, and at that time within her majesty's realm. If she would send him, they were ready to make him the head of their faction; and should she wish him to be accompanied by any confidential person whose advice he might use, they would gladly receive him also. In the concluding passage of Hunsdon's letter to the queen, he entreated her, when such "good stuff was offered," not to hesitate about its acceptance; adding, that if the Hamiltons were allowed to bear the chief sway, the French would not be long absent. Lastly, he implored her to watch the Bishop of Ross, and take good heed to the Scottish queen.¹

Randolph soon after arrived in the capital, and notwithstanding the encouraging assurances of Morton and his friends, found things in an unsettled state.² Yet this was far from ungratifying to a minister who considered that the strength of his royal mistress lay in the dissensions of her neighbours. A messenger had been sent from Argyle and the Hamiltons, who warned their opponents not to acknowledge any other authority than the queen's; declaring that, as her lieutenants in Scotland,³ they were

¹ MS. Letter, a copy by Hunsdon himself. State-paper Office, 30th Jan. 1569-70. Hunsdon to Elizabeth.

² He arrived on the 9th February 1569-70. ³ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 157. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, 22d February, 1569-70, Randolph to Cecil. Also MS., State-paper Office, copy, Proclamation by the Lords of the Secret Council, Feb. 1569-70.

ready to punish the regent's murder, but ridiculing the idea that the whole race of Hamilton were guilty because the murderer bore their name. To this the reply was a public proclamation interdicting any one from holding communication with that faction, under the penalty of being esteemed accomplices in their crimes. Soon after, Lethington, who till now had remained in a nominal captivity in the castle, was summoned, at his own request, before the Privy-council, where he pleaded his innocence of the king's murder, complained of the grievous calumnies with which his name had been loaded, and professed his readiness to stand his trial, and reply to any who dared accuse him. This, as it was well known, no one was prepared to do; and the Council immediately pronounced him guiltless, reinstating him in his accustomed place and office, "as a profitable member of the commonwealth," and one who had been an excellent instrument in the "forth-setting of God's glory."⁴ Of his accession to the murder there is not the slightest doubt, and as little of Morton's guilt, who on this occasion took the lead as chancellor of the kingdom. The whole transaction was an idle farce, and deceived no one; but the party required Lethington's able head, and imagined they could thus secure his assistance.

At this meeting Randolph communicated his instructions, and assured the Council of his royal mistress's support, on condition that they would remain true to the principles of the late regent. For her part, he said, she would increase the rigour of Mary's confinement, and support them both with money and soldiers; from them she expected that they would watch over the young king, prevent his being carried to France, maintain religion, preserve peace, and deliver up the rebel Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland.⁵ A convention of the

⁴ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 158, MS., State-paper Office, copy, endorsed by Randolph, "Declaration of the Lord of Liddington's innocence of the king's murder."

⁵ MS. Draft, State-paper Office, in Cecil's hand. Minute of the Queen's majesty's In-

whole nobility of the realm was summoned for the 4th of March, to take these offers into consideration, and proceed to the election of a regent.¹ Letters were written to Lennox, requesting his immediate presence; and Randolph, with an evident alacrity, recommenced his intrigues with all parties.

In the midst of this, a new rebellion broke out in the north of England. It was led by Leonard Dacres, a Roman Catholic gentleman, of noble family,² bred up in the bosom of Border war, who had been associated in the enterprises of Westmoreland and Northumberland, but was kept back by his friends at that time from any open demonstration. When still brooding over his projects, the law adjudged the rich family estates, of which he deemed himself the heir, to the daughters of his elder brother: and, stung with this imagined injury, he at once broke into rebellion, seized the castles of Naworth, Greystock, and other places of strength, collected three thousand men, and bid defiance to the Government. It was an alarming outbreak, and greatly disturbed Elizabeth; but the flame was extinguished almost as soon as kindled, for Lord Hunsdon instantly advanced from Berwick with the best soldiers of his garrison there, and Sir John Forster, warden of the middle marches, meeting him with the Border militia, they encountered the fierce insurgent on the bank of the little river Gelt, in Cumberland, and after a sanguinary battle entirely defeated him. Dacres and his brother fled into Scotland, where his presence, along with Westmoreland and Northumberland, formed a just subject of complaint and jealousy to the English queen.³

Scotland in the meantime presented constructions given to Mr Randolph, 29th January 1569-70.

¹ MS. State-paper Office, endorsed by Randolph, "Letters sent by the Lords for the Assembly, 17th February 1569-70."

² Second son of Lord Dacres of Gillesland.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Hunsdon to the Queen, 20th Feb. 1569-70. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, same to same, 27th February 1569-70. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 60.

a melancholy spectacle: torn between two factions—one professing allegiance to the captive queen, the other supporting the king's authority; both pretending an equal desire for the peace of their country, but thwarted in every effort to accomplish it by their own ambition and the intrigues of England. Of these two parties, the friends of the captive queen were the stronger, and must soon have triumphed over their opponents, but for the assistance given the latter by Elizabeth. They included the highest and most ancient nobility in the country: the Duke of Chastelherault and the whole power of the Hamiltons; the Earls of Argyle, Huntly, Athole, Errol, Crawford, and Marshal; Caithness, Cassillis, Sutherland, and Eglington; the Lords Hume, Seaton, Ogilvy, Ross, Borthwick, Oliphant, Yester, and Fleming; Herries, Boyd, Somerville, Innermeith, Forbes, and Gray.⁴ The mere enumeration of these names shews the power of that great party in the state which now anxiously desired the restoration of the queen, and resisted the hostile dictation, whilst they still entreated the good offices, of Elizabeth. They possessed the castles of Edinburgh and Dumbarton; the first commanding the capital of the country, the second its strongest fortress, and, from its situation on the Clyde, affording a port by which foreign succours could be easily introduced into Scotland. But their chief strength lay in Kirkaldy of Grange, and Maitland of Lethington the secretary; Grange being universally reputed the bravest and most fortunate soldier, and Maitland the ablest statesman in the country.

It was generally believed that, with two such heads to direct them, Mary's party would be more than a match for their opponents. Yet these were formidable enough. Their great leader, and the soul of every measure, was the Earl of Morton, a man bred up from his infancy in the midst of civil

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, Petition to Elizabeth, 16th April 1570. Endorsed by Cecil, "Duke of Chastelherault, and his Associates, to the Queen's majesty."

commotion, “nusselled in war and shedding of blood,” (to use a strong phrase of Cecil’s,) and so intensely selfish and ambitious, that country, kindred, or religion, were readily trampled on in his struggle for power. His interest had made him a steady Protestant. By his professions of attachment to the Reformation, he gained the powerful support of Knox and the Church, and he was completely devoted to England. His associates were Lennox, Mar the governor of the infant king, Glencairn, and Buchan, with the Lords Glamis, Ruthven, Lindsay, Cathcart, Methven, Ochiltree, and Saltoun.²

Such was the state and strength of the two parties when Randolph returned to Scotland as ambassador from Elizabeth; and, acting under the directions of Cecil, exerted himself with such success to increase their mutual asperity, that every attempt at union or conciliation proved unsuccessful. The miserable condition of the country at this moment has been strikingly described by Sir James Melvil, an eye-witness, and an old acquaintance of Randolph. “Now,” says he, “the two furious factions being framed in this manner, the hatred and rage against each other grew daily greater. For Master Randolph knew the diversities that were among the noblemen, and the nature of every one in particular, by his oft-coming and long residence in Scotland. Among the ladies he had a mother, and a mistress, to whom he caused his queen oft send communications and tokens.) He used also his craft with the ministers,³ and offered gold to divers of them. One of them that was very honest refused his gift, but he told that his companion took it as by way of charity. I am not certain if any of the rest took presents, but undoubtedly he offered to such as were

in meetest rowmes,⁴ to cry out against factions here and there, and kindle the fiercer fire, so that the parties were not content to fight and shed each other’s blood, but would flyte⁵ with injurious and blasphemous words, and at length fell to the down-casting of each other’s houses, whereunto England lent their help. . . . Then, as Nero stood up upon a high part of Rome, to see the town burning which he had caused set on fire, so Master Randolph delighted to see such fire kindled in Scotland, and, by his writings to some in the court of England, glorified himself to have brought it to pass in such sort, that it should not be got easily slokenit⁶ again; which, when it came to the knowledge of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, he wrote in⁷ Scotland to my brother and me, and advertised us how we were handled, detesting both Master Cecil as director, and Master Randolph as executor.”⁸

In such a state of things repeated attempts were made to hold that convention of the nobility which had been appointed to meet early in March; but all proved ineffectual; and Argyle, in a conference with Morton and Lethington at Dalkeith, bitterly reproached Randolph as the chief cause of their miseries. He appears to have taken the attack with great composure, and contented himself with writing a humorous satirical letter to Cecil, in which he amused the English secretary with a portrait of his Scottish brother. “The Lord of Lethington,” said he, “is presently at Seton, to air himself before this convention. His wits are sharp enough, and his will good enough to do good, but fearful and doubtful to take matters in hand. He doubteth some thunder-clap out of the south, (an allusion to Lennox’s threatened coming,) for he hath spied a cloud somewhat afar off, which, if it fall in this country, wrecketh both him and all his family. . . . I doubt nothing so much of him as I do of the length of his life. He

¹ Haynes’ State Papers, p. 581. The phrase is applied by Cecil to the Duke of Anjou.

² MS. Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Instructions given by the Lords of Scotland to the Commendator of Dunfermline, 1st May 1570.

³ The Clergy.

⁴ Offices.

⁵ Scold. • Extinguished with water. ⁷ Into.

⁸ Melvil’s Memoirs, pp. 233, 234.

hath only his heart whole, and his stomach good, [with] an honest mind, somewhat more given to policy than to Mr Knox's preachings. His legs are clean gone, his body so weak that it sustaineth not itself, his inward parts so feeble that to endure to sneeze he cannot for annoying the whole body. To this the blessed joy of a young wife hath brought him."¹

On the day this letter was written, the populace of Edinburgh, by whom the late regent had been much beloved, were highly excited by the display, in the open street, of a black banner, on which he was painted lying dead in his bed, with his wound open; beside him the late king under the tree, as he was found in the garden of the Kirk of Field; and at his feet the little prince kneeling and imploring God to avenge his cause. Many poems and ballads, describing Moray's assassination, and exhorting to revenge, were scattered amongst the people, and the exasperation of the two parties became daily more incurable.²

The failure of the great assembly appointed for March was followed by busy preparations. Every baron assembled his vassals; armed conventions of the king's and queen's lords, as the two rival factions were now termed, were held in various quarters; and Morton and Mar, who had been encouraged by the message from Elizabeth,³ having assembled their friends in great strength in the capital, were eagerly pressing for the return of Lennox, when the arrival of Monsieur Verac from the court of France gave a sudden check to their hopes.⁴ He brought letters of encouragement and ample promises of succour to Mary's friends; and, as they had received similar assurances from Spain, they

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, 1st March 1569-70.

² State-paper Office; printed Broadsides, in black letter, by Lekprevik.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mar to the Queen of England, Edinburgh, 14th March 1569-70.

⁴ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Lethington to Leicester, 29th March 1570. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, John Gordon to Elizabeth, Berwick, 18th April 1570.

concentrated their whole strength, advanced to Edinburgh, consulted with Grange the governor of the castle, restored the Duke of Chastelherault and Lord Herries to liberty,⁵ compelled Randolph to fly from the scene of his intrigues to Berwick, and summoned a general convention of the whole nobility at Linlithgow. Its declared object was to return an answer to France, and deliberate upon the best means of restoring peace to their unhappy country; at the same time they addressed a petition to Elizabeth, in which they earnestly implored her to put an end to the miserable divisions of Scotland, by restoring the Scottish queen.⁶

Very different thoughts, however, from peace or restoration, were then agitating the English queen. The intrigues of Norfolk, the successive northern rebellions, the flight of the disaffected into Scotland, the invasion of Buccleuch and Fernyhurst, the fact that this "raid" had been especially cruel, and that its leaders had shewn a foreknowledge of Moray's death, besides the perpetual alarm in which she was kept by the dread of French intervention and Spanish intrigue, had roused her passion to so high a pitch, that she commanded Sussex,⁷ her lieutenant in the north, to advance into Scotland at the head of seven thousand men. The pretext was, to seize her rebels; the real design was, to let loose her vengeance upon the friends of Mary, to destroy the country by fire and sword, and to incite the different factions to actual hostilities.⁸

On being informed of this resolution, the queen's lords exerted their utmost efforts to prevent the advance of a force which they were wholly unprepared to resist.⁹ In England the Bishop of Ross and the French ambas-

⁵ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 167.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Duke of Chastelherault and his Associates to the Queen's majesty, written towards the end of March 1570, despatched from Edinburgh, 16th April.

⁷ Supra, p. 294.

⁸ MS. Letter, draft by Cecil, State-paper Office, the Queen to Mr Randolph, 18th March 1569-70. Melvil's Memoirs, p. 227.

⁹ Copy of the time, endorsed by Cecil,

sador warmly remonstrated with the queen; Lethington, too, assured Leicester that a demonstration of hostilities would infallibly compel them to combine against her, and three several envoys successively sought the camp of Sussex to deprecate his advance. But Elizabeth was much excited; Randolph, at this moment, had warned her of a conspiracy against her life, and hinted that Mary was at the bottom of it,¹ whilst Morton blew the flame by accounts of the hostile activity of Lethington, the total desertion of Grange, and the warlike preparations of their opponents.

No one that knew the English queen expected that she would have the magnanimity or the humanity to arrest her arms. Under such provocation the storm burst with terrific force. Sussex, entering the beautiful district of Teviotdale and the Merse, the country of Buccleuch and Fernyhirst, destroyed at once fifty castles or houses of strength, and three hundred villages.² In a second inroad, Home castle, one of the strongest in the country, was invested and taken: about the same time the western Border was invaded by Lord Scrope, a country particularly obnoxious as the seat of Herries and Maxwell; and the track of the English army was marked by the flames of villages and granges, and the utter destruction of the labours of the husbandman.³ To follow up this severity, Elizabeth despatched Lennox, her intended regent, and Sir William Drury, the Marshal of Berwick, at the head of twelve hundred foot and four hundred horse. This little army included the veteran companies, called the old bands of Berwick,⁴ and had orders to advance to the capital, and avenge the death of the regent upon the house of Hamilton.

State-paper Office, Instructions for the Laird of Trahoun, 15th April, 1570. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 18th April 1570, John Gordon to the Queen's majesty.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 14th April 1570. Randolph to Cecil.

² Murdin, p. 769. Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 90.

³ Spottiswood, p. 237.

⁴ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 176.

To Lennox no more grateful commission could be intrusted; and, making all allowance for the recollection of ancient injuries, it is difficult to regard the intensity of his vengeance without disgust. His letters addressed to Elizabeth and Cecil are unfavourable specimens of his character—full of abject expressions of implicit submission, unworthy of his country and his high rank.⁵ He appears to have been wretchedly poor, entirely dependent for his supplies upon the bounty of the English queen; and although on his march a grievous sickness had brought him to the brink of the grave, his first thoughts on returning health were, as he boasted to Cecil, "that he should soon pull the feathers out of the wings of his opponents."⁶ This he and his colleague, the Marshal of Berwick, performed very effectually; for having advanced to Edinburgh, and formed a junction with Morton and his friends, they dispersed the queen's faction, who were besieging the castle of Glasgow, and commenced a pitiless devastation of Clydesdale and Linlithgowshire, razing their castles, destroying their villages, and making a desert of the whole territory. In this expedition the palace of Hamilton, belonging to the Duke of Chastelherault, with his castles of Linlithgow and Kinneil, and the estates and houses of his kindred and partisans, were so completely sacked and cast down, that this noble and powerful house was reduced to the very brink of ruin.⁷

Having achieved this, Lennox wrote in an elated tone to Cecil, glorying in the flight of their enemies, recommending the English to reduce Dumbarton, and imploring Elizabeth to pity his poverty and send him more money.⁸ From Lethington the Eng-

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lennox to Cecil, 16th April 1570. Same to same, 27th April 1570. Same to same, 8th May 1570.

⁶ Ibid., April 27, 1570. Ibid., 8th May 1570.

⁷ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 177. Murdin, p. 769.

⁸ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lennox to Cecil, 17th May 1570, Edinburgh. Ibid., The Lords to Sussex, 16th May 1570, Edinburgh.

lish minister received a letter in a different and more manly strain. It was his astonishment, he said, and a mystery to him, that the Queen of England had renounced the amity of a powerful party in Scotland, consisting of the best and noblest in the realm, for the friendship of a few utterly inferior to them in degree, and whose strength he might judge of by their being only able to muster two hundred horse. In their mad attempts they had thought nothing less than that they might have carried off the ball alone, and have haled the devil without impediment; but he had thrown a stumbling-block in their way, and although they would fain make him odious in England, he trusted Leicester and Cecil would give as little heed to their aspersions as he did to their threats. Meanwhile, he was still ready to unite with them in all good offices, and, whatever happened, would not be Lot's wife. As for Randolph, he feared he had been but an evil instrument, and would never believe the queen could have followed the course she now adopted, if truly informed of the state of Scotland.¹

These remonstrances of Lethington were repeated and enforced in England by the French ambassador and the Bishop of Ross, and Elizabeth began to have misgivings that her severity would unite the whole country against her. She instantly wrote to Sussex, described her interview with the French ambassador, declared she had justified the expedition as well as she could, by asserting that she was only pursuing her rebels, but that she was sorry he had taken so decided a part, and would not hear of his besieging Dumbarton.² At the same time she commanded Randolph to return from Berwick to Edinburgh, and inform the two factions that, hav-

ing "reasonably" chastised her rebels, she had yielded to the desire of Mary's ambassador, the Bishop of Ross, and was about to open a negotiation for her restoration to her dominions. In the meanwhile, Sussex was directed to correspond with Morton and his party. Ross repaired to Chatsworth, to deliberate with his royal mistress; and her offers for an accommodation were carried into Scotland by Lord Livingston and John Beaton. The English army then retired, and Elizabeth assured both factions of her earnest desire for the common tranquillity.³

These transactions occupied a month, and led to no pacific result—a matter of little surprise to those who were assured of the hollowness of the professions on the side of the English queen and Morton. The one had not the slightest intention of restoring Mary; the other deprecated such an event as absolute ruin; and, having humbled his enemies, looked forward to a rich harvest of forfeiture and plunder.

A correspondence between Sussex, the leader of the late cruel invasions, and Lethington, was the only remarkable feature in the negotiations. The English earl had been a commissioner in the conferences at York; he was familiar with the services of Moray, Lethington, and Morton, during their days of fellowship, and was selected by Elizabeth to remonstrate with Maitland on his desertion of his old friends. To his letters the secretary replied by some bitter remarks on his recent cruelties, and he exposed also the infamous conduct of the king's faction to their queen and their native country. Sussex answered, that he would be glad to know how Lethington reconciled his doings at York, when he came forward and accused his sovereign of murder, with his new zeal in her defence. "Your lordship," said he, addressing the Scottish secretary, "must call to remembrance that your queen was by you and others, then of the faction of Scotland, and not by the queen my sovereign, nor by her

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 17th May 1570. I have ventured to state the letter from internal evidence to be addressed to Cecil. It is a copy, and does not bear any superscription.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Minute by Cecil of the Queen's Letter to Sussex, May 22, 1570.

³ MS., State-paper Office, Draft by Cecil. Queen to the Lords of Scotland, May 31, 1570.

knowledge or assent, brought to captivity, deprived of her royal estate, to which she was by God's ordinance born lawful inheritrix, condemned in parliament, her son crowned as lawful king, the late Earl of Moray appointed by parliament to be regent, and revoked from beyond the seas; yourself held the place of secretary to that king and state; and after she escaped from her captivity, from the which the queen my sovereign had by all good means sought to deliver her, and had been the only means to save her life whilst she continued there, yourself and your faction at that time came into England, to detect her of a number of heinous crimes, by you objected against her; to offer your proofs, which to the uttermost you produced; to seek to have her delivered into your own hands, or to bind the queen's majesty to detain her in such sort, as she should never return into Scotland, and to persuade her majesty to maintain the king's authority. Now, my lord, to return to my former questions, which be but branches from those roots, and cannot be severed from them, I do desire to know by what doctrine you may think that cause to be then just, which you now think to be unjust? [how] you may think your coming into England, your detecting her of crimes by you objected, your proofs produced for that purpose, your requests delivered to the queen my sovereign to deliver her into your custody, or to promise to keep her as she return not to Scotland; and to maintain her son's authority, (then allowed always by you to be your lawful king.) —by what doctrine, I say, may ye think the causes hereof to be then just, which you now think to be unjust?

"I would be glad to admit your excuse, that you were not of the number that sought rigour to your queen, although you were *with* the number, if I could do it with a safe conscience. But as I will say, 'Non est meum accusare, aliud ago,' and therefore I will not enter into those particularities, so can I not make myself ignorant of what I saw openly delivered by word and writing, with a general as-

sent of the late regent, and all that were in his company, which tended not to a short restraint of your queen's liberty, but was directly either to deliver her captive into your own custody, or to bind the queen my sovereign to detain her in such sort as she should never after trouble the state of Scotland: wherein, if her perpetual captivity or a worse matter were meant, and not a restraint for a time, God and your own consciences, and others that dealt then with you, do know. It may be you dealt openly on the one side and secretly on the other, wherein how the queen my sovereign digested your doings I know not; but this I know well, that if her majesty would have digested that which was openly delivered unto her by the general assent of your whole company, in such sort as you all desired, devised, and earnestly (I will not say passionately) persuaded her at that time to do for her own surety, the benefit of Scotland, and the continuing of the amity between both the realms, there had been worse done to your queen than either her majesty or any subject of England that I know, whomsoever you take to be least free from passions, could be induced to think meet to be done."¹

This cutting personal appeal, from one so intimately acquainted with the secrets of these dark transactions, was evaded by Lethington, under the plea that if he went into an exculpation, it must needs "touch more than himself," glancing, probably, at his royal mistress; but Sussex in a former letter having assumed to himself some credit for revoking the army, the Scottish secretary observed, that they, no doubt, would need some repose after their exertions, and ironically complimented him for his activity in the pursuit of his mistress's rebels.

"When your lordship," said he, "writeth, that you intend to revoke her majesty's forces, I am glad thereof of more than I was at their coming in; and it is not amiss for their ease

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, copy of the time, Sussex to Lethington, 29th July 1570.

to have a breathing time, and some rest between one exploit and another. This is the third journey they have made in Scotland since your lordship came to the Borders, and [you] have been so well occupied in every one of them, that it might well be said, . . . they have reasonable well acquitted themselves of the duty of old enemies, and have burnt and spoiled as much ground within Scotland as any army of England did in one year, these hundred years by-past, which may suffice for a two months' work, although you do no more."¹

At the same time, Randolph, in a letter from Berwick to his old military friend Grange, bantered him on his acceptance of the priory of St Andrews—a rich gift, with which it was reported Mary had secured his services. "Brother William," said he, "it was indeed most wonderful unto me, when I heard that you should become a prior. That vocation agreeth not with anything that ever I knew in you, saving for your religious life led under the cardinal's hat, when we were both students in Paris."²

It would have been well if these little attacks and bickerings, which I have given as illustrating the character of some of the leading actors in the times, had been the only weapons resorted to during this pretended cessation of hostilities; but such was far from being the case. On the contrary, the country presented a miserable spectacle of intestine commotion and private war, and it was in vain that all good men sighed and struggled for the restoration of order and tranquillity; the king's authority was despised, the queen remained a captive, there was no regent to whom the poor could look for protection; every petty baron, even every private citizen, found himself compelled to follow a leader, and, under the cessation of agriculture and national industry, the nation was rapidly sinking into a state of pitiable weak-

ness and bankruptcy. In the mean time, the Bishop of Ross and the Lord of Livingston continued their negotiations for Mary;³ Cecil and the Privy council deliberated, and the poor captive, languishing under her lengthened imprisonment, refused no concession which she deemed consistent with her honour; but every effort failed, from the exasperation of the two factions.

Morton and Lennox had despatched the Abbot of Dunfermline to carry their offers to Elizabeth, and were thrown into deep anxiety by her doubtful replies.⁴ She had stimulated them to take arms, and now, as they had experienced on former occasions, she appeared ready to abandon them, when to advance without her aid was impossible, and to recede would be absolute ruin.

In this difficulty, a decided step was necessary, and they determined to raise Lennox to the regency. It was a measure imperatively required, as the only means of giving union and vigour to their party; and, as they acted with the advice of Randolph the English ambassador, they were well assured that, although Elizabeth affected neutrality for the moment, such a step would not be unacceptable to her. But in deference to her wishes for delay, they proceeded with caution: In a convention of the lords of the king's faction, held at Stirling on the 16th of June, they conferred upon Lennox the *interim* office of lieutenant-governor under the king, until the 12th of July. This choice they immediately imparted to the English queen, and earnestly entreated her advice as to the appointment of a regent.⁵ Her reply was favourable:

³ MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Minute of the Queen's letter to Sussex, a draft by Cecil, July 29, 1570. Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 91.

⁴ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Instructions of the Lords of Scotland to the Abbot of Dunfermline, May 1, 1570. Also copy, State-paper Office, the Lords of Scotland to the Queen's majesty, June 1, 1570, Edinburgh, by the Abbot of Dunfermline. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lennox, Morton, and the Lords to the English Privy-council, 24th June 1570.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lennox,

¹ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Ledington to Sussex, 2d June 1570, Dunkeld.

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, May 1, 1570. Thomas Randolph to the Laird of Grange.

the disorders of the country now called loudly, she said, for some settled government; and whilst she disclaimed all idea of dictation, and should be satisfied with their choice wherever it fell, it appeared to her that her cousin the Earl of Lennox, whom they had already nominated their lieutenant, was likely to be more careful of the safety of the young king than any other.¹ Thus encouraged, a convention was held at Edinburgh on the 12th of July, in which Lennox was formally elected regent. Lethington was then in Athole; Huntly, whom Mary had invested with the office of her lieutenant-governor,² remained at Aberdeen, concentrating the strength of the north; and the other lords who supported the queen's authority were busily employed arming their vassals in their various districts. Of course, none of these appeared at the convention; and Grange, who commanded in the castle, and might have battered to pieces the Telbooth, where the election of the new governor took place, treated the whole proceedings with the utmost contempt. He refused to be present, would not even hear the letter of Elizabeth read by Randolph, and issued orders that no cannon should be fired after the proclamation.³ Upon this, Sussex told Cecil that he had written "roundly" to him; but so little impression was made by his remonstrances, that the queen's lords declared their determination to hold a parliament at Linlithgow on the 4th of August, and publicly avowed their

Morton, and the Lords to the Privy-council, June 24, 1570. The names shew the truth of Lethington's observations as to the weakness of the king's party, both in the ancient nobility and in numbers, in comparison with the queen's. They are—Earls Lennox, Morton, Mar, Glencairn, Angus; Lord Glammis, Lindsay, Ruthven, Ochiltree, Borthwick, Cathcart, and Graham the master of Montrose. Of the clergy, Robert (Pitcairn) abbot of Dunfermline, and Robert bishop of Caithness.

¹ Spottiswood, p. 241.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sussex to Cecil, July 15, 1570, Alnwick.

³ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, B.C., Sussex to Cecil, 19th July 1570, Alnwick.

resolution never to acknowledge Lennox as regent.⁴

Both parties now prepared for war, and the new governor, aware that his only chance of success rested on the support of England, despatched Nicholas Elphinstone to urge the immediate advance of Sussex with his army, and the absolute necessity of having supplies both of money and troops. Without a thousand footmen it would be impossible for him to make head, he said, against the enemy: Huntly was moving forward to Brechin with all his force; the Hamiltons were mustering in the west; Argyle and his Highlanders and Islesmen were ready to break down on the Lowlands; and, at the moment he wrote, Lord Herries and the Lairds of Lochinvar, Buccleuch, Fernyhirst, and Johnston were up in arms, and had begun their havoc.⁵ These representations alarmed Elizabeth. It was her policy that the two factions should exhaust each other, but that neither should be overwhelmed; and with this view she directed Sussex to ravage the west Borders "very secretly," and under the cloak of chastising her rebels the Dacres, who were harboured in these quarters.⁶ At the same time that she thus herself kept up the war, she publicly upbraided both parties with the ceaseless rancour of their hostilities, and, with much apparent anxiety, encouraged Lord Livingston and the Bishop of Ross in negotiating a treaty for Mary's restoration.

But whilst nothing but professions of peace and benevolence were on her lips, Scotland was doomed to feel the consequences of such cruel and ungenerous policy in a civil war of unexampled exasperation and atrocity. To prevent any parliament being convened by the queen's lords at Linlith-

⁴ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Instructions by Lennox to Nicholas Elphinstone, July 23, 1570.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lennox to Randolph, Stirling, July 31, 1570. Ibid., Instructions to Nicholas Elphinstone, July 23, 1570.

⁶ Draft by Cecil, State-paper Office, July 26, 1570, Queen's majesty to Sussex.

gow, Lennox assembled his forces, with which he joined the Earl of Morton, and advancing against Huntly, stormed the castle of Brechin, and hung up thirty-four of the garrison (officers and soldiers) before his own house.¹ These exploits were communicated by Randolph to Sussex, now busy with his preparations for his expedition against the West, and he informed him at the same time that, in the negotiations then proceeding in England, the Scottish queen had, it was said, behaved with uncommon spirit. (Elizabeth, before she restored her to liberty, having insisted on being put in possession of the castles of Edinburgh and Dumfarton, Mary, on the first mention of such conditions by the Bishop of Ross, indignantly declared that the matter needed not an instant's consideration.) Elizabeth might do to her what she pleased, but never should it be said that she had brought into bondage that realm of which she was the natural princess.²

Sussex, at the head of four thousand men, now burst into Annandale, and advanced in his desolating progress to Dumfries. His own letter to the Queen of England, the mediatrix between the two countries, will best describe the nature of his visit. "I repaired," said he, "with part of your majesty's forces to Carlisle, and, receiving no such answer from the Lord Herries as I expected, . . . I entered Scotland the 22d of this present, and returned thither the 28th, in which time I threw down the castles of Annand and Hoddom, belonging to the Lord Herries; the castles of Dumfries and Carleverock, belonging to the Lord Maxwell; the castles of Tynehill and Cowhill, belonging to the Lairds of Tynehill and Cowhill; the castles of Arthur Greame and Richies George Greame, ill neighbours to England and of Englishmen sworn, now Scots, and some other piles where the rebels have been

maintained."³ He observed, in a separate letter to Cecil, "That he had avoided as much as he might the burning of houses or corn, and the taking or spoiling of cattle or goods, to make the revenge appear to be for honour only;" and yet, he complacently adds, as if afraid lest his royal mistress should misunderstand his leniency, "I have not left a stone house to an ill neighbour within twenty miles of this town."⁴ It is difficult to recount these transactions of Sussex, without expressing abhorrence of the cruel and nefarious policy by which they were dictated.

This invasion was followed by an abstinence of two months, during which the negotiations for Mary's restoration were continued; but, after repeated and protracted deliberations between the commissioners of Elizabeth, the Scottish queen, and the regent, the issue demonstrated the hollowness and insincerity of the whole transaction upon the part of the English queen, and the faction which she supported. Secretary Cecil and Sir Walter Mildmay had repaired to Mary at Chatsworth: they had proposed to her the conditions of an accommodation; and after taking the advice of her commissioners, and communicating with the King of France and the Duke of Alva,⁵ whose answers she received, she had declared her acquiescence. All matters appeared to be upon the eve of a speedy arrangement, and it only remained for the English and Scottish commissioners to have a final discussion, when new demands, to which it was impossible for the Scottish queen to submit, were started by Elizabeth; and Morton for the first time declared that his instructions were limited to a general authority to treat of the amity of the kingdoms, and that he and his colleagues had no power to receive their queen into Scotland, or to give

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Carlisle, 29th Aug. 1570, Sussex to the Queen's Majesty.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Carlisle, Sussex to Cecil, 29th August 1570.

³ Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 109, 120, 121, 122, 123.

¹ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Randolph to Sussex, 14th August 1570.

² Ibid.

up to Elizabeth the person of their infant sovereign.¹

This declaration Lesley, the bishop of Ross, with a pardonable warmth, characterised as an unworthy subterfuge, complained that his mistress had been deceived, and insisted that, if there was any sincerity upon the part of the English queen, the treaty for the restoration of the Queen of Scots might be terminated upon terms of perfect honour and safety.² But the appeal was addressed to ears determined to be shut against it. Morton's conduct appears to have been the result of a previous correspondence with Cecil and Sussex; he was well assured his declaration would be nowise unacceptable to Elizabeth herself: and the result justified his expectation. The English deputies, in giving a final judgment, observed, that as the representatives of Mary, and those of the king and the regent, could not come to an agreement, they considered their commission at an end, and must break off the negotiations.³

During all this time the regent, although professing to observe the truce, continued a cruel persecution of his opponents, and determined to assemble a parliament in which he might let loose upon them all the vengeance of feudal forfeiture. Against this Elizabeth remonstrated, but in such measured and feeble terms that her interference produced little effect.⁴ It was not so, however, with Sussex,—a cruel soldier, but a man of honour,—who, on hearing a report that a sentence of treason was about to pass upon Lethington, wrote this sharp letter to Randolph:

"Master Randolph,—I hear that Lethington is put to the horn, his lands and goods confiscated and seized; if it so be, it doth not accord with the good faith the queen's majesty meant in the articles accorded between her highness and the

¹ Lesley's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 125, 127, 130, 131, 133.

² Ibid., pp. 134, 137, 139.

³ Ibid., pp. 138, 139.

⁴ Original draft in Cecil's hand, State-paper Office, 25th September 1570, Minute of the Queen's Majesty's letter to Sussex.

Bishop of Ross, nor with the writing I subscribed, and therefore I have written to the regent and others in that matter. . . . And although I, for my part, be too simple to be made a minister in princes' causes, yet truly I weigh mine own honour so much, as I will not be made a minister to subscribe to anything wherein my good faith and true meaning should be abused to my dishonour, or any person trusting to that he shall accord in writing with me, should thereby be by fraud deceived."⁵

At this moment nothing could exceed the exasperation of the two parties, who employed every method they could devise to blacken each other. The regent was branded by Huntly, the lieutenant for the queen, as a stranger and alien; a man sworn to the service of England, supported by foreign power, and dead to every honourable and patriotic feeling. Huntly and his friends, on the other hand, were attacked as traitors to the government, enemies to religion, band-breakers, assassins of the late virtuous and godly regent, and associates in that infamous band for the murder of their sovereign, which many had seen and well remembered. They replied, that if they were guilty or cognisant of the murder, their opponents were not less so, and produced the band itself, signed by Moray, the regent, amongst other names. It was answered, that this was not the *true* contract for the king's murder, which Lethington had purloined, and now produced another in its place. The disputes became public, and Randolph, who felt indignant at the attack upon his old friend the regent Moray, addressed a remarkable letter to Cecil in his defence. "Divers," said he, "since the death of the late regent, some to cover their own doings, (how wicked soever they have been,) some to advance their own cause, grounded upon never so much injustice and untruth, seek to make the late regent

⁵ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, 8th October 1570, Sussex to Randolph. Also *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 193.

odious to the world, spreading, after his death, such rumours of him as they think doth make most to their advantage towards their innocence in crimes that they are burdened with, and would fain be thought guiltless of; which is not only daily done here among themselves, but spread so far abroad as they think to find any man that will give credit either to their word or writing."

He then continued, "To name such as are yet here living, most notoriously known to have been chief consenters to the king's death, I mind not; only I will say, that the universal bruit cometh upon three or four persons, which subscribed into a 'band,' promising to concur and assist each other in doing the same. This band was kept in the castle, in a little coffer or desk, covered with green; and after the apprehension of the Scottish queen at Carberry Hill, was taken out of the place where it lay by the Laird of Liddington, in presence of Mr James Balfour, then clerk of the register, and keeper of the keys where the registers are. This being a thing so notoriously known, as well by Mr James Balfour's own report as the testimony of others that have seen the same, is utterly denied to be true, and another band produced, which they allege to be it, (containing no such matter, at the which, with divers other noblemen's hands, the regent's was also,) made a long time before the band of the king's murder was made: and now [they] say, that if it can be proved by any band that they consented unto the king's death, the late regent is as guilty as they; and for testimony thereof, as I am credibly informed [they] have sent a band to be seen in England, which is either some new band made among themselves, and the late regent's hand counterfeited at the same, (which in some other causes I know hath been done,) or the old band, at which his very own hand is, containing no such matter.

"Wherefore," continued Randolph to Cecil, "knowing so much of his innocence in so horrible a crime, be-

sides the honour of so noble and worthy a personage, so dear a friend to the queen's majesty my sovereign, I am loath that, after his death, his adversaries should, by false report, abuse the honest and godly, especially her majesty, with such writings as they may either frame themselves, or with such reports as are altogether void of truth. With this I am bold myself to trouble your honour, and wish that the truth hereof were as well known to all other, as I am assured myself that he was never participant of the king's death, how maliciously soever he be burdened therewith."¹

Amidst these mutual heartburnings and accusations, the party of the Church, still led by Knox, warmly espoused the cause of the regent and the interests of Elizabeth. He had bitterly deplored the loss of Moray, and, aware of Mary's application for succour to the courts of Spain and France, two powers connected, in his mind, with everything that was corrupt and idolatrous, he denounced her intrigues in the pulpit, and inveighed against her as a murderer and an adulteress, in his usual strain of passionate and personal invective. "It has been objected against me," said he, "that I have ceased to pray for my sovereign, and have used railing imprecations against her. Sovereign to me she is not, neither am I bound to pray for her in this place. My accusers, indeed, term her their sovereign, and themselves the nobility and subjects professing her obedience; but in this they confess themselves traitors, and so I am not bound to answer them. . . . As to the imprecations made against her, I have willingly confessed that I have desired, and in my heart desire, that God of His mercy, for the comfort of His poor flock within this realm, will oppose His power to her pride, and confound her and her flatterers and assisters in their impiety. I praise my God He of His mercy hath not disappointed me of my just prayer, let them call it imprecation or execra-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, 15th October 1570, Randolph to Cecil.

tion, as pleases them. It has oftener than once stricken, and shall strike in despite of man, maintain and defend her whoso list. I am farther accused," he continued, "that I speak of their sovereign (mine she is not) as that she were reprobate, affirming that she cannot repent; whereto I answer that the accuser is a calumniator and a manifest liar, for he is never able to prove that, at any time, I have said that she could not repent; but I have said, and yet say, that pride and repentance abide not in one heart of any long continuance. What I have spoken against the adultery, against the murders, against the pride, and against the idolatry of that wicked woman, I speak not as one that entered into God's secret counsel; but being one, of God's great mercy, called to preach, according to His blessed will revealed in His Holy Word, I have oftener than once pronounced the threatenings of His law against such as have been of counsel, knowledge, assistance, or consent, that innocent blood should be shed. And this same thing I have pronounced against all and sundry that go about to maintain that wicked woman, and the band of those murderers, that they suffer not the death according to His Word, that the plague may be taken away from this land, which shall never be, so long as she and they remain unpunished, according to the sentence of God's law."¹

To enter into the minute details of that miserable civil war, by which the country was daily ravaged, and the passions of the two rival factions wrought up to the highest pitch of exasperation, would be a sad and unprofitable task. Notwithstanding some assistance in arms and money from France and Spain,² and the incessant exertions of Grange and Lethington to keep up the spirit of the queen's friends, it was evident that they were becoming exhausted under the long-protracted struggle; and the capture of Dumbarton castle by the regent,

which occurred at this time, gave a severe shock to their fortunes.

This exploit, for its extraordinary gallantry and success, deserves notice. The castle, as is well known, is strongly situated on a precipitous rock, which rises abruptly from the Clyde, at the confluence of the little river Leven with this noble estuary. It was commanded by Lord Fleming, who, from the beginning of the war, had kept it for the queen; and its importance was great, not only from its strength, which made many pronounce it impregnable, but because its situation on the Clyde rendered it at all times accessible to foreign ships, which brought supplies.

Captain Crawford of Jordanhill, to whom the attack was intrusted, had been long attached to the house of Lennox. He was the same person whose evidence was so important regarding the death of Darnley, and who afterwards accused Lethington of participation in the murder, since which time he appears to have followed the profession of arms. In the enterprise he was assisted by Cunningham, commonly called the Laird of Drumwhassel, one of the bravest and most skilful officers of his time; and he had been fortunate in securing the assistance of a man named Robertson, who, having once been warden in the castle, knew every step upon the rock familiarly, and for a bribe consented to betray it.

With this man, Crawford and his company marched from Glasgow after sunset. He had sent before him a few light horse, who prevented intelligence by stopping all passengers, and arrived about midnight at Dumbuck, within a mile of the castle, where he was joined by Drumwhassel and Captain Hume, with a hundred men. Here he explained to the soldiers the hazardous service on which they were to be employed, provided them with ropes and scaling ladders, and advancing with silence and celerity, reached the rock, the summit of which was fortunately involved in a heavy fog, whilst the bottom was clear. But on the first attempt all was likely to be

¹ Bannatyne's Journal, pp. 109-112, inclusive.

² Historie of James the Sext, pp. 62, 64.

lost. The ladders lost their hold whilst the soldiers were upon them ; and had the garrison been on the alert the noise must inevitably have betrayed them. They listened, however, and all was still ; again their ladders were fixed, and this time their steel hooks catching firmly in the crevices, they gained a small jutting-out ledge, where an ash-tree had struck its roots, which assisted them, as they fixed their ropes to its branches, and thus speedily towed up both the ladders and the rest of their companions.

They were still, however, far from their object. They had reached but the middle of the rock, day was breaking, and when for the second time they placed their ladders, an extraordinary impediment occurred. One of the soldiers in ascending was seized with a fit, in which he convulsively grasped the steps so firmly, that no one could either pass him or unloose his hold. But Crawford's presence of mind suggested a ready expedient ; he tied him to the ladder, turned it, and easily ascended with the rest of his men. They were now at the bottom of the wall, where the footing was narrow and precarious ; but, once more fixing their ladders in the cope-stone, Alexander Ramsey, Crawford's ensign, with two other soldiers, stole up, and though instantly discovered on the summit by the sentinel, who gave the alarm, leapt down and slew him, sustaining the attack of three of the guard till he was joined by Crawford and his soldiers. Their weight, and struggles to surmount it, now brought down the old wall and afforded an open breach, through which they rushed in, shouting, "A Darnley ! a Darnley !" Crawford's watchword, given evidently from affection for his unfortunate master the late king. The garrison were panic-struck, and did not attempt resistance ; Fleming the governor, from long familiarity with the place, managed to escape down the face of an almost perpendicular cleft or gully in the rock, and passing through a postern, which opened upon the Clyde, threw himself

into a fishing-boat, and passed over to Argyleshire.¹

In this exploit the assailants did not lose a man, and of the garrison only four soldiers were slain. In the castle were taken prisoners, Hamilton, the bishop of St Andrews, who was found with his mail shirt and steel cap on ;² Verac, the French ambassador, Fleming of Boghall, and John Hall, an English gentleman, who had fled to Scotland after Dacre's rebellion. Lady Fleming, the wife of the governor, was also taken, and treated by the regent with great courtesy, permitted to go free, and to carry off with her her plate and furniture ; but Hamilton, the primate, was instantly brought to trial for the murder of the king and the late regent, condemned, hanged, and quartered, without delay. Of his being not only cognisant, but deeply implicated in both conspiracies, there seems little doubt ;³ but the rapidity with which the legal proceedings were hurried over, and the feeling of personal vengeance which mingled with the solemn judgment of the law, caused many who were assured of his guilt to blame his death. The reformed clergy pointed to his fate as a judgment from Heaven ; the people, who were aware of his corrupt life and profligate principles, rejoiced over it ; and this distich was fixed to the gallows on which he suffered :—

" Cresce diu felix arbor, semperque vireto
Frondibus, qui nobis talia poma feras."

The loss of Dumbarton was a severe shock to the queen's cause. It gave a death-blow to all hopes of foreign aid ; and the regent advanced to Edinburgh with the determination of holding a parliament, collecting his whole force, and at once putting an end to

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 203. Buchanan, book xx. cap. 28 to 32. Historie of James the Sext, pp. 70, 71. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to the Privy-council, 3d April 1571. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to the Council, 9th April 1571.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to the Council, April 9, 1571.

³ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Herries to Lord Scrope, 10th April 1571. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lennox, regent, to Burghley, 14th May 1571.

the struggle.¹ Grange, however, still held out the castle, keeping the citizens of the capital who favoured the king's faction in constant terror, and affording a rallying point to the queen's friends. During the late truce he had been guilty of many excesses; and on one occasion had broken the common prison, and rescued one of his soldiers who had stabbed a gentleman in the street. It was said, also, that he had carried off at the same time a woman, suspected of being cognisant of the late regent's murder. Upon hearing of the outrage, Cecil, his old friend, recently created Lord Burghley, remonstrated in indignant terms, expressing his horror that one in his high command, and who had in former years of their intimacy been a professor of the Gospel, should be guilty of so flagrant a contempt of its dictates. The concluding portion of his letter is remarkable:—“How you will allow my plainness,” said he, “I know not; but surely I should think myself guilty of blood, if I should not thoroughly mislike you; and to this I must add, that I hear, but yet am loath to believe it, that your soldiers that broke the prison have not only taken out the murderer, your man, but a woman that was there detained as guilty of the lamentable death of the last good regent.

“Alas! my lord, may this be true? and with your help may it be conceived in thought that you,—you, I mean, that was so dear to the regent, should favour his murderers in this sort. Surely, my lord, if this be true, there is provided by God some notable work of His justice to be shewed upon you; and yet I trust you are not so void of God's grace: and so for mine old friendship with you, and for the avoiding of the notable slander of God's Word, I heartily wish it to be untrue. . . . I pray you command me to my Lord of Ledington, of whom I have heard such things as I dare not believe of him, and yet

his deeds make me afraid of his well-doing.”²

This eloquent appeal of the English minister would have been well calculated to recall Grange to his duty, had he and Lethington not been aware that there were occasions when deeds of violence, and even assassination, did not excite, in his placid temper, such extreme feelings of abhorrence.

In the meantime, Morton, Makgill, and the Abbot of Dunfermline returned from their negotiations in England;³ and, on rejoining the regent, it was determined to resume hostilities with vigour. Lennox issued a summons for the whole force of the realm to meet him at Linlithgow on the 19th of May, and Morton concentrated at Dalkeith the troops which were in regular service and pay.⁴ Grange on his part was nothing intimidated. He had received money from Mary, who, although in captivity, contrived to keep up a secret intercourse with her supporters; about the same time a seasonable supply of a thousand crowns, with arms and ammunition, arrived from France.⁵ The Duke of Chastelherault joined him with three hundred horse and one hundred hagbutters. Lord Herries and Lord Maxwell entered the capital with two hundred and forty horse; Fernyhirst soon followed them; and the castle was so strong in its garrison and its fortifications, that he regarded the motions of his opponents with little anxiety.

On the 9th of May, Lennox and Morton, having united their forces, encamped at Leith, and erected a small battery on a spot called the Dow Craig,⁶ above the Trinity Church, with the object of commanding the Canongate, a principal street of the city. Here, whilst the cannon of the castle opened upon them, they assembled to hold their parliament, which was numerously attended, and fulminated

² Copy, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil himself, “Copy of my letter to the Laird of Grange, 10th January 1570-1.”

³ 19th April.

⁴ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 209.

⁵ Ibid., p. 211.

⁶ The Pigeon's Rock.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Regent to Cecil, (now Lord Burghley,) Leith, 14th May 1571.

a sentence of forfeiture against Lethington, his brother, Thomas Maitland, and others of the most obnoxious of their opponents. Having hurried through these proceedings, they broke up their assembly, and abandoned the siege, whilst Grange immediately held a rival parliament in the queen's name, and attacked his enemies with their own weapons.¹

It is impossible to conceive a more miserable spectacle than that presented at this moment by the country and the capital: the country torn and desolated by the struggles of two exasperated factions, whose passions became every day more fierce and implacable, so that the very children fought under the name of king's and queen's men;² the capital in a state of siege; whilst the wretched citizens, placed between the fires of the castle and the camp of the regent, were compelled to intermit their peaceful labours, and either to serve under the queen's banner, or to join Lennox, and have their property confiscated. Two hundred chose this last severe alternative, and fled to the camp at Leith, upon which Grange passionately deposed the provost and magistrates, and placed Kerr of Fernyhirst, a fierce and powerful Border chief, in the civic chair, with a council of his retainers to act as bailies.³

Amid these transactions, Sir William Drury, the marshal of Berwick, had been sent by Elizabeth to open negotiations with the leaders of the two factions, and, if possible, to bring about a pacification. Such, at least, was the avowed object of his mission; but the court of England have been accused by Sir James Melvil of acting at this moment with great duplicity.⁴ The various ministers whom they sent into Scotland, if we may believe this writer, a man of character, and intimately acquainted with the times and the actors, were instructed to widen

rather than to heal the wounds of the country; and it is certain that Drury's conferences with Kirkaldy, Morton, and Lennox, were followed by fiercer struggles than before. Nor were English intrigue, and the jealous or selfish passions of the rival factions, the only causes of the continuance of this unhappy state of things: fanaticism added her horrors to the war; and the reformed clergy, by a refusal to pray for the queen, inflamed the resentment of her friends, and gave an example of rancour to the people. Knox, their great leader, had some time before declared his determination never to acknowledge her authority, and no longer to supplicate God for her welfare.⁵ On the entry of his enemies, the Hamiltons, into the capital, he had been compelled to a precipitate retreat;⁶ but his flight was followed by more resolute measures on the part of the Kirk and the clergy, an assembly being convoked some time after at Stirling, which confirmed his judgment and reiterated their refusal.⁷

Grange now determined to hold a parliament in Edinburgh, whilst the regent and the king's lords resolved to assemble the three estates in Stirling. On the queen's side, sentences of forfeiture and treason were pronounced against Lennox the regent, Morton, and Mar, the Lords Lindsay, Hay, Cathcart, Glammis, Ochiltree, Makgill, clerk-register, the Bishop of Orkney, and a long list of the king's faction, amounting nearly to two hundred persons.⁸ The assembly, however, which was only attended by two of the spiritual and three of the higher temporal lords, was scarcely entitled to the name of a parliament.⁹ On the other hand, their opponents, with a greater attendance of the nobility, and

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 215. Historie of James the Sext, p. 87.

² Crawford, p. 179.

³ Diurnal, p. 226.

⁴ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 240. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Elizabeth, Leith, 23d August 1571.

⁵ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 225. Historie of James the Sext, p. 93. Bannatyne's Journal, p. 98.

⁶ Historie of James the Sext, p. 75. Bannatyne's Journal, p. 118.

⁷ Historie of James the Sext, p. 80.

⁸ Diurnal, pp. 236, 242, 243.

⁹ Spottiswood, p. 256. MS., State-paper Office, August 1571. The speech of the king in the Tolbooth.

a more solemn state, met at Stirling. Here the young king, then an infant of five years, was invested in his royal robes, and carried from the palace to the parliament by his governor, the Earl of Mar, where he read a speech which had been prepared for him.¹ The doom of treason was then pronounced upon the Duke of Chastelherault, the Earl of Huntly, Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange, Lord Claud Hamilton, the Abbot of Arbroath, Sir James Balfour, Robert (afterwards Sir Robert) Melvil, and many others; whilst it was determined to despatch immediately an embassy to Elizabeth, for the purpose of concluding a more intimate alliance, and assuring her of their speedy triumph over the faction of the Scottish queen.² Before the parliament separated, a slight circumstance occurred which was much talked of at the time. The little king, in a pause of the proceedings, turning to his governor, asked him what house they were sitting in? On being answered, that it was called the parliament house, he looked up to the roof, and pointing to a small aperture which his quick eye had detected, observed, that there was a hole in that parliament. People smiled, but the superstitious declared that it augured disaster to the regent, whose death occurred only five days after,³ in an enterprise which seemed likely at first to have brought the war on Grange's side to a fortunate and glorious conclusion.

This able soldier having learnt the insecurity with which the regent and his friends were quartered at Stirling, concluded that it would not be difficult, by a rapid night march, to surprise the city. Huntly, Lord Claud Hamilton, Buccleuch, Spens of Wormiston, one of the bravest and most successful captains who had been bred in these wars, Kerr of Fernyhirse, and two officers named Bell and Calder,

were the leaders whom he selected. Their force consisted of sixty mounted hagbutters and three hundred and forty border horse; and as Bell had been born in Stirling, and knew every lane and alley, no better guide could have been chosen. This little force rode out of Edinburgh in the evening of the 3d of September, some horsemen having been previously sent to the ferry and other parts between Stirling and the capital, to arrest all passengers and prevent any information being carried there.¹ They first took the road towards Peebles, and it was reported in the enemy's camp at Leith, that they meditated an attack upon Jedburgh. Favoured by the night, however, they wheeled off in the direction of Stirling; and having left their horses about a mile from that city, entered it on foot by a secret passage in the gray of the morning, before the inhabitants were stirring. So complete was the surprise, that they occupied every street without difficulty;⁵ broke up the noblemen's houses; and in an incredibly short time took prisoners the regent himself, the Earls of Morton, Glencairn, Argyle, Cassillis, Eglinton, Montrose, and Buchan, with the Lords Semple, Cathcart, and Ochiltree. These were placed under a guard in their houses, and at this moment, had the Borderers kept together, the victory was complete; but the Liddesdale men went to the spoil, emptied the stables of their horses, broke up the merchant' booths, encumbered themselves with booty, and dispersed in the lanes instead of watching the prisoners. It happened here, too, as is often the case in an action of this kind, that a few minutes are often invaluable. Morton, before he was taken, had blockaded his house, and refusing to surrender till it was set on fire, his resistance gave the townsmen time to recover themselves.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, John Case to Drury, Stirling, August 29, 1571.

² MS., State-paper Office, August 1571. Persons forfeited in Scotland, Maitland, vol. li. p. 1124. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 245.

³ Historie of James the Sext, p. 88.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, from Scotland, a spy to Lord Burghley, 5th September, 1571. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Grange and Lethington to Sir William Drury, 6th September 1571.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Grange and Maitland to Drury, 6th September, 1571

Mar, in the meantime, rushing from the castle with forty soldiers, commenced a fire from an unfinished lodging, which still fronts the High Street, and drove Huntly and Buccleuch, with their prisoners, from the market-place to another quarter, where they were assailed by the citizens on all sides; whilst Lennox, Morton, and the rest of the noblemen, so lately captives, snatched up such weapons as were at hand in the confusion, and soon put their enemies to flight.

In the midst of this confusion and struggle, Captain Calder, rendered furious by the disappointment, determined that the regent, at least, should not escape, and coming up behind, shot him through the back. Lennox had been made prisoner by Spens of Wormiston; and this brave and generous man, perceiving Calder's cruel intention, threw himself between them, and received the same shot in his body, and was then hacked to pieces by the soldiers, Lennox faintly imploring them to spare one who had risked his life in his defence. Calder afterwards confessed that he was instigated to this savage deed by Lord Claud Hamilton and Huntly, before they took the town, in revenge for the death of the Archbishop of St Andrews, whose ignominious execution the Hamiltons had sworn to visit to the uttermost upon the regent. A swift vengeance, however, overtook his assassin, for he and Bell, the chief leader of the enterprise, having fallen into the hands of the enemy, were instantly executed; Bell being hanged, having first been put to the torture, and Calder broke upon the wheel.¹

¹ Second examination of Bell, State-paper Office, 6th September 1571. "George Bell . . . being put to pains, declares he came running down the gate for Huntly and Claud, and cried, 'Shoot the regent! the traitor is coming upon us, and ye will not get him away.' Declared, also, that Claud inquired of his deponer, where is the regent? who answered again, he is down the gait, who gave commandment to him to follow, and gar slay him, and so past down and bad shoot him, as he else said. In the meantime, Warmestoun bad seek a horse to carry him away." There is also, in the State-paper Office, the examination of Captain Calder or Cadder, who confesses that he shot the regent; and before

Buccleuch was taken, only nine of the queen's party slain, and sixteen made prisoners. The loss would have been much greater, but that the Liddesdale and Teviotdale Borderers had stolen every hoof within the town, and not a horse could be found to give the chase. It was certainly, even with its half success, a daring exploit; and Grange, in a letter written a few days after, whilst he deplored the fate of the regent, could not refrain from some expressions of exultation. "In their parliament time, (saith he,) when all their lords, being twenty earls and lords, spiritual and temporal, were convened in their principal strength, wherein there were above two thousand men, three hundred of ours entered among them, were masters of the town, at least for the space of three hours, might have slain the whole noblemen if they had pleased, and retired themselves in the end with a rich booty, and without any harm."² The unfortunate regent was able to keep his seat on horseback till he entered the castle of Stirling, but the first view of his wound convinced every one that it was mortal, and his own feelings telling him he had but a few hours to live, he begged the chief nobles to come to his bedside. Here he recommended the young king, his grandson, to their affectionate care; reminded them, that as he had been faithful to his office, and had sealed his services with his blood, so he trusted they would fill his place by a man that feared God and loved his country. For his servants, they knew he had been cut off before he could reward them, so he must leave their recompence to his friends; for himself, he would only ask their prayers; and for my poor wife Meg, said he, turning to Mar and wringing his hand, you, my lord, must remember me lovingly to her, and do your best for her com-

coming to Stirling, that he had received orders from Huntly and Lord Claud Hamilton to shoot both the regent and the Earl of Morton. MS., State-paper Office, 6th September 1571.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, Sept. 13, 1571.

fort.¹ He died that same evening, the 4th of September, and on the succeeding day, the Earl of Mar, governor to the young king, was chosen regent. His competitors for the office were Argyle, whom Morton had induced to join the king's faction, and Morton himself, who was supported by English influence; but the majority declared for Mar, whose character for honesty in these profligate times stood higher than that of any of the nobles.²

On his accession to the supreme power, Mar confidently hoped that, by a judicious mixture of vigour and conciliation, he should be able to reduce the opposite faction, and restore peace to the country;³ but the difficulties he had to contend against were infinitely more complicated than he anticipated. On the one hand, Grange's position was strong, and his military resources far from being exhausted, as the regent himself soon experienced; for, after an attempt to bombard the city, first on the east side, and afterwards by a strong battery on the south, in a spot called the Pleasance, the name it still bears, he was silenced in both quarters, and forced to retire on Leith.⁴ On the other hand, every attempt at negotiation was defeated by the unreasonable and overbearing conduct of Morton, who had entirely governed the late regent, and determined either to rule or to overwhelm his successor. This daring and crafty man, who was the slave of ambition, knew well that his best chance of securing the supreme power lay in keeping up the commotions of the coun-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, Berwick, Sept. 10, 1571. Spottiswood, p. 257.

² Ibid., September 14. Also, Spottiswood, p. 257. In a letter of Drury's to Burghley, MS., State-paper Office, B.C., September 5, 1571, he says, speaking of Lennox's reported death, "If it be true, the queen's majesty hath received a great loss, the like in affection she will never find of a Scottish man born person."

³ Ibid., September 14, 1571. Drury gives Mar a high character, as "one of the best nature in Scotland, and wholly given to quietness and peace."

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Berwick, 9th October 1571, Drury to Burghley. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, Berwick, November 4, 1571.

try; and in this perfidious effort he received rather countenance than opposition from the Government of England. So successful were his efforts, that for some months after Mar's accession to the regency, and during the siege of the capital, the war assumed an aspect of unexampled ferocity.

In the midst of all this misery, the supporters of the captive queen were generally successful. Mar had been compelled to abandon the siege of Edinburgh, and now sent an earnest petition for assistance from Elizabeth.⁵ In the north, Adam Gordon of Auchendown,⁶ Huntly's brother, defeated the king's adherents in repeated actions, and brought the whole of the country under Mary's obedience.⁷ Gordon's talents for war were of the first order, and in his character we find a singular mixture of knightly chivalry, with the ferocity of the Highland freebooter. Of the first, he exhibited a striking instance at Brechin, where, after a total defeat given to the Earl of Buchan, he generously dismissed nearly two hundred prisoners, most of them gentlemen, without ransom or exchange. Of his vengeance a dreadful example was given in his burning the castle of Towie, with its unfortunate mistress, the Lady Forbes, and her whole household, thirty-seven in number. In her husband's absence, she had undertaken its defence, and too rashly defied him from the battlements. Such a combination as that exhibited by Gordon was no frequent production in these dark and sanguinary times.⁸

Meanwhile, in England, was discovered a new intrigue of the Duke of Norfolk for his marriage with the Scottish queen. This nobleman had been liberated from the Tower, under

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil, Cunningham's demands, October 1, 1571.

⁶ Auchendown castle in Banffshire.

⁷ Historie of James the Sext, pp. 109-113, inclusive.

⁸ Historie of James the Sext, pp. 97, 111. Crawford in his Memoirs, p. 213, attempts to defend Gordon from the exploit, because it was executed by one of his captains named Ker; but gives no proof that it was done without Gordon's orders.

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the most solemn promises to forsake all intercourse with Mary; but his ambition overmastered both prudence and honour, and he had again embarked deeply with the Bishop of Ross and other friends of the captive princess in their schemes for her restoration and marriage. It was not to be expected that the English queen should again pardon so dangerous an attempt, and her animosity was roused to the highest pitch when she discovered the skill with which the plot had been carried on, its ramifications with her own Roman Catholic subjects, its favourable reception by the courts of France and Spain, and the undiminished spirit and enterprise of Mary. Norfolk was accordingly tried and executed, the Bishop of Ross sent to the Tower, and a determined resolution embraced, and openly declared by Elizabeth, that henceforth she would forsake all thoughts of the Scottish queen's restoration, and compel a universal obedience to the government of the king her son.

To obtain this, however, she was unwilling to incur the expense of an army, or the risk of a defeat. And by her orders, Sir William Drury, the marshal of Berwick, and Lord Hunsdon, the governor, began a correspondence with Grange, with the object of bringing him to terms. Lord Burghley, also, after a silence of two years, sent a friendly message to Lethington, and the secretary seemed rejoiced that their intercourse was renewed. He lamented their interrupted friendship, expressed satisfaction that some seeds of love yet remained, and trusted they would still produce either flower or fruit. To go into all the history of these sad times, he said, or of his conduct in them, would be as tedious as to declare, "*Bellum Trojanum ab Ovo;*" but this he would say, that since the beginning of their acquaintance he had reverenced him as a father, and followed his counsels as of the dearest friend he had. As to Drury's messages, the matters they had to treat of were such as related to honour, duty, and surety; no light subjects. They proposed, therefore, to send a

special messenger to the queen's majesty, to inform her particularly of their intentions, and, in return, expected that she would grant a commission either to Drury or some other person, who should be empowered to conclude a treaty with them.¹

This high tone appears to have disgusted Elizabeth: Drury's letters led to no satisfactory result; and Lord Hunsdon, after a tedious correspondence, was equally unsuccessful. He was instructed to bring over the queen's faction either by negotiation or by force; but when Grange discovered that he had no commission from his royal mistress to bind her by any positive agreement, he wisely rejected his offers; and as the force of which he talked did not appear to be forthcoming, totally disregarded his threats. There is, indeed, every reason to believe that Elizabeth's chief object at this moment in the negotiations with Mary's supporters was, to ascertain their exact strength, and the practicability of reducing the kingdom under the king's obedience.²

Meanwhile, owing to the season of the year, for winter was commencing, she determined to delay all hostilities, and permit the rival factions to exhaust each other, confident that her interest would not materially suffer by the delay. Nor were her hopes in this disappointed. For many miserable months Scotland presented a sight which might have drawn pity from the hardest heart: her sons engaged in a furious and constant butchery of each other;³ every peaceful or useful art entirely at a stand; her agriculture, her commerce, and manufactures neglected; nothing heard, from one

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Burghley, castle of Edinburgh, 26th Oct. 1571.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Berwick, 10th November 1571, Hunsdon to the Lairds of Lethington and Grange; and, also, copy of the time, State-paper Office, Grange and Lethington to Hunsdon, Edinburgh castle, 9th December 1571.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph and Drury to Leicester and Burghley, Leith, February 23, 1571-2. Also Ibid., same to Hunsdon, Leith, February 26, 1571-2. Also MS. Letter, Randolph and Drury to Lord Hunsdon, Leith, 10th April 1572.

end of the country to the other, but the clangour of arms and the roar of artillery; nothing seen but villages in flames, towns beleaguered by armed men, women and children flying from the cottages where their fathers or husbands had been massacred, and even the pulpit and the altar surrounded by a steel-clad congregation, which listened tremblingly with their hands upon their weapons. Into all the separate facts which would support this dreadful picture I must not enter, nor would I willingly conduct my reader through the shambles of a civil war: prisoners were tortured or massacred in cold blood, or hung by forties and fifties at a time; countrymen driving their carts, or attempting to sell their stores in the city, were hanged or branded with a hot iron; women coming to market were seized and scourged; and as the punishment did not prevent repetition of the offence, one delinquent, who ventured to retail her country produce, was barbarously hanged in her own village near the city.¹ These are homely details, but they point to much intensity of national misery, and made so deep an impression, that the period, taking its name from Morton, was long after remembered as the days of the "Douglas wars."

When we consider the aggregate of human misery and guilt which such a state of things supposes, it is impossible to withhold our abhorrence at the cold-blooded policy which, for its own ends, could foster its continuance. Yet at this moment Elizabeth appears to have secured the services of Morton by a pension, and these services were wholly directed to oppose every effort made by the regent to restore peace to the country.² His principle was, never to sheath the sword till his enemies had unconditionally surrendered, and the cause of the captive queen should be rendered utterly hopeless.

¹ The village of West Edmonston. *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 296. *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 103.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Instruction by Morton, given to Sir William Drury to communicate to the Queen's Majesty. About 28th November 1571.

Such a consummation, however, seemed still distant. The efforts of Gordon in the north, and Kirkaldy and Lethington in the capital, exhibited no signs of feebleness. Even the shocking severities I have mentioned of Morton produced little other feelings than execrations against their author; and before the middle of summer 1572 the affairs of the queen were once more in a prosperous condition. Gordon had completely triumphed in the north;³ her supporters were masters of the principal city and the strongest fortress in the kingdom; they had been repeatedly supplied with money, arms, and ammunition, by France and Spain, and of the continued assistance of the latter, at least, had no reason to despair.⁴ They had defeated Lord Semple in the west; their arms, under Fernyhirst, had carried all before them in the south; it was evident, from her long delays, that the Queen of England had some invincible repugnance to send any force to bombard the castle of Edinburgh; and if she did, they were in want of nothing for their defence; whilst their garrisons of Niddry, Livingston, and Blackness,⁵ amply supplied them with provisions.

At this crisis, Elizabeth, who looked with alarm upon the increasing strength of her opponents, proposed a truce for two months, preparatory, as she said, to the conclusion of a general peace, on terms which should secure the honour and safety of the queen's supporters. The negotiations were managed by Sir William Drury and the French ambassador, De Croc, whose services, from the league recently entered into between France and England, were not so cordially given to the captive queen as on former occasions. It seems strange that so able a statesman as Lethington, and one so intimately acquainted with the

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Lord Hunsdon, Restalrig, 9th July 1572.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph and Drury to Lord Hunsdon, 26th February 1571-2. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mar to Burghley, April 30, 1572.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury and Randolph to Hunsdon, 17th April 1572.

duplicity of the English queen, should on this occasion have been prevailed upon to consent to a measure which ultimately proved the ruin of his mistress's cause.¹ But he and Grange had been branded by their opponents as men of blood, who had obstinately refused to give a breathing-time to their bleeding and exhausted country; and to confute the aspersion they agreed to the truce. It was signed on the 30th of July, and contained an express provision that, as soon as might be, the nobility and estates of the realm should assemble to deliberate upon a general peace. On the same day the truce was proclaimed in the capital, amid the shouts and joy of the inhabitants, and the now harmless thunder of the ordnance of the castle.

Having thus suffered themselves to be overreached by their crafty opponents, Kirkaldy and Lethington were not long allowed to be ignorant of their fatal blunder. Mar the regent was indeed sincere, but he was completely controlled by Morton. This ambitious man now ruled the council at his will; he successfully thwarted every effort to assemble the estates, or deliberate upon a general pacification; and, unfortunately for Scotland, a calamity occurred at this moment which struck all Europe with horror, and produced the most fatal effects upon any negotiations with which Mary and her supporters were connected.² This was the massacre of St Bartholomew, an event exhibiting, in dreadful reality, the result of Popish principles and intrigue; and which, though applauded in those dark times, is now happily regarded, alike by Romanists and Protestants, with unmixed feelings of execration and disgust. Five hundred Protestant gentlemen and men of rank, and about ten thousand of inferior condition, were butchered

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lethington and Grange to my Lord Ambassador of England, Edinburgh Castle, 13th July 1572. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, Resterwick, (Restalrig,) 18th July 1572. Ibid., copy of the time, 30th July 1572; Abstinence of hostility, signed by the Castilians.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir William Drury to Lord Burghley, 15th September 1572.

in cold blood; the greater part in the capital of France, where the king himself, it was reported, directed the assassins, looking from the windows of his palace upon the miserable victims who fled from their assailants.³ In the provinces the same dreadful scenes were repeated; and when the news arrived in England, communicated by Walsingham, Elizabeth's ambassador at the court of Charles the Ninth, the suddenness of the shock electrified the whole country. Grief, pity, and indignation shook the national mind as if it had been that of one man. When Fenelon, the French ambassador, presented himself at the palace, he found the queen and the court clad in mourning. He was received in silence; the stillness of the grave, as he himself described it, seemed to reign in the apartments; the queen, indeed, endeavoured to preserve her equanimity, and although deeply sorrowful, received him without complaint; but the courtiers, fixing their eyes on the ground, refused to notice his greeting. Instead of a palace he seemed to have entered a chamber of death, where men were met to mourn for their dearest friends.⁴

But sorrow and indignation were not the only, or even the strongest feelings excited on this occasion in the breast of Elizabeth. She had, indeed, recently concluded a league with France; yet this, though it restrained the outward violence, did not diminish the intensity of her feelings. Fears for her own life, and terror for the result of those dark plots which she had already repeatedly detected and severely punished, perpetually haunted her imagination, and shook even her strong and masculine mind. Of these conspiracies Mary was the centre; she was engaged in a perpetual correspondence with the court of Rome; with France, whose name could not now be uttered without calling up images of horror; with Spain, where Philip and the Duke of Alva, men hated by the

³ Turner's Elizabeth, vol. iv. History of England, p. 322.

⁴ Carte, vol. iii. p. 522. Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 113, 114.

Protestants, had recently lent her the most effectual assistance; and, what was more alarming to Elizabeth than all, the recent trial of Norfolk, and the confessions of the Bishop of Ross, now a prisoner in the Tower, had convinced her that as long as the Scottish queen remained in England the minds of her Roman Catholic subjects would be kept in perpetual agitation; that no permanent tranquillity could be reasonably expected; and that, judging by the recent excesses in France, her own life might not be secure.

It is impossible to blame such feelings or such conclusions. They were natural and inevitable: yet here let it not be forgotten that the terrors of the English queen are to be traced to an act of flagrant injustice. She had seized and imprisoned Mary contrary to every principle of the law of nations, to the promises she had given, to the commonest feelings of humanity: and her present thorny anxieties for her life and crown were a just retribution for such conduct. Making, however, every allowance for the fears of her council and her people, and the attachment of her great minister, Burghley, we are scarcely prepared for the calmness with which the death of the Scottish queen was recommended by the House of Commons, and strongly urged by Cecil. Elizabeth, however, would not listen to their arguments, and at last peremptorily put an end to their consultations.¹ She had already publicly declared that there had been no sufficient evidence exhibited against Mary by those who accused her of the death of her husband; and to bring her to trial in England, or to cause her to be publicly put to death without trial, would, she felt, be equally unjust and odious. She accordingly contented herself, after the death of Norfolk, with sending Lord De la Ware, Sir R. Sadler, and

Bromley, her solicitor-general, to interrogate the Scottish queen regarding her political connexion with that unfortunate man, and to remonstrate against any continuation of her intrigues.² On this occasion Mary, although plunged in grief for the recent execution of the duke, was roused by the harshness of the messengers to a spirited vindication of her rights as a free princess. Some of the allegations she admitted, some she palliated, others she peremptorily denied; and the interview led, and was probably intended to lead, to no definite result.

But if Elizabeth abandoned all thoughts of bringing her royal prisoner to a public trial, and putting her to death in England, it was only to embrace a more dark and secret expedient, and what she judged a surer mode of getting rid of her hated and dangerous prisoner. The plot was an extraordinary one, and its details, upon which I now enter, are new to this part of our history.

Previous to the massacre of St Bartholomew, and after the failure of the negotiations for peace in Scotland, which were conducted by the French ambassador De Croc, and Sir William Drury, Elizabeth had resolved to send a new envoy to that country, with the object of watching over the English interests. When the dreadful news arrived from France, Burghley and Leicester pressed upon the English queen the necessity of instant attention to her safety on the side of Scotland, and Mr Henry Killigrew was selected to proceed thither.³ He was instructed to negotiate both with Mar the regent and the opposite faction led by Lethington and Grange; to exhort both sides to observe the late

¹ Camden, p. 442. MS., State-paper Office, papers of Mary queen of Scots. The Lord De la Ware's and the rest of the commissioners' proceedings with the Scottish queen, June 11, 1572. Also, MS. draft by Cecil, State-paper Office, minute to the Scottish queen by the Lord De la Ware, &c.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, copy, August 1572. Instructions to Henry Killigrew touching the troubles in Scotland, being sent thither after the great murder that was in France.

¹ The English bishops, in answer to a question of Burghley's, had given it as their opinion that Elizabeth might lawfully put Mary to death, and justified their sentence by reasons of Scripture taken from the Old Testament. See British Museum, Caligula, C. ii. fol. 524, and D'Ewes's Journal, p. 507. Also, Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 106-108

truce; to give them the details of the late horrible massacre, expressing the queen's conviction that it was premeditated; and to implore them to be on their guard.

Such was his public mission; but shortly before he set out, Killigrew was informed that a far greater matter was to be intrusted to his management, that it was to be conducted with the utmost secrecy, and was known to none but Elizabeth, Leicester, and Burghley.¹ In an interview with the queen herself, to which none were admitted but these two lords, he received his instructions, which remain drawn up by Cecil in his own hand.² It was explained to him that it had at last become absolutely necessary to execute the Scottish queen, and that, unless the realm were delivered of her, the life of Elizabeth was no longer safe. This might, indeed, be done in England, but for some good respects it was thought better that she should be sent to Scotland, and delivered to the regent and his party, "to proceed with her by way of justice."³ To accomplish this must depend, it was said, upon his skilful management. He must frame matters so, that the offer must come from them, not from the English queen. This would probably not be difficult, for they had already many times before, under the former regents, made proposals of this nature. If such an offer were again made, he was now empowered to agree to it; but it must be upon the most solemn assurance that she should

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, November 23, 1572.

² Murdin, p. 224.

³ Dr Robertson notices the paper in Murdin, and severely condemns this proposal of Elizabeth. This eminent writer interprets it as if the queen had desired the Scottish regent to bring Mary to a public trial, and, if condemnation followed, to execute her. It seems to me clear, however, that the words, "*proceed with her by way of justice*," when taken with the context, can bear but one meaning, the same meaning in which Leicester employs the phrase, in his letter in the Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXIV.—that of executing her summarily and without delay. See Dr Lingard, vol. viii. p. 118.

be put to death without fail, and that neither England nor Scotland should be endangered by her hereafter: for otherwise, it was added, to have her and to keep her would be of all other ways the most dangerous.⁴ If, however, he could contrive it so that the regent or Morton should secretly apply to some of the lords of the English council to have her given up, now was the best time; only, it was repeated, it must be upon absolute surety that she should receive what she deserved, and that no further peril could ever possibly occur, either by her escape, or by setting her up again. To make certain of this, hostages must be required by him, and those of the highest rank—that is to say, children or near kinsfolk of the regent and the Earl of Morton. Last of all, he was solemnly reminded that the queen's name must not appear in the transaction; and Elizabeth herself, in dismissing him, bade him remember that none but Leicester, Burghley, and himself were privy to the great and delicate charge which was now laid upon him, adding a caution, that if it "came forth," or was ever known, he must answer for it. To this Killigrew replied, "that he would keep the secret as he would his life;" and immediately set out on his journey.⁵

On entering Scotland, his first visit was to Tantallon, Morton's castle, where that nobleman was confined by sickness; but the ambassador received from him the strongest assurances of devotedness to the young king his sovereign, and to Elizabeth, whose interest he believed to be the same. Knox had returned again to Edinburgh, and the recent news of the massacre in France was producing the strongest excitement. On repairing to Stirling to meet the regent, he passed through the capital, and encountered there his old friend Sir James Melvil, from whom he understood something of the state of the

⁴ Murdin, p. 224.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, November 23, 1572.

Castilians,¹ as the queen's party were now called; and, in his subsequent interview with Mar, he found him expressing himself decidedly against any intimate alliance with France, and determined, so long as he had any hope of effectual assistance from England, never to connect himself with a foreign power. So far all was favourable; but it was evident to Killigrew that, without additional forces, which he well knew Elizabeth would be unwilling to send, the regent could never make himself master of the castle.

These, and similar particulars connected with his public mission, he communicated, as he had been previously instructed, to the Secretary of State; but his proceedings in the other great and secret matter touching Mary were contained in letters addressed to Cecil and Leicester jointly, and he appears to have lost no time in entering upon it. He informed them, in a despatch on the 19th of September, that he had already "dealt with a fit instrument, and expected that the regent and the Earl of Morton would soon break their minds unto him secretly."² The instrument thus selected to manage the secret and speedy execution of the unhappy Mary was Mr Nicholas Elphinston, a dependent of the late regent Moray, and who, from an expression of Killigrew's, appears to have been on a former occasion employed in a similar negotiation. Matters, however, were not expedited with that rapidity which Burghley deemed necessary; and this minister, although assured by his agent that he could not for his life make more speed than he had done, determined to urge him forward. For this purpose he addressed to him a letter, jointly from himself and Leicester. In reading it as it still exists, in the original draft in Cecil's hand, with its erasures and corrections, it is striking to remark

¹ Castilians, so called from their having possession of the castle. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, September 14, 1572.

² MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 365, Killigrew to Burghley, September 19, 1572.

the contrast between its cold and measured style and the cruel purpose which it advocates. It was written from Windsor, and ran thus:—

"After our hearty commendations, we two have received your several letters directed to us, whereof the last came this last night, being of the 24th of September, and as we like well the comfort you give us of the towardness in the special matter committed to you, so we do greatly long to receive from you a further motion with some earnestness, and that both moved to you and prosecuted by them of valour, as we may look for assurance to have it take effect; for when all other ways come in consideration, none appeareth more ready to be allowed here by the best, than that which you have in hand. Wherefore we earnestly require you to employ all your labours to procure that it may be both earnestly and speedily followed there, and yet also secretly, as the cause requireth: and when we think of the matter, as daily, yea, hourly, we have cause to do, we see not but the same reasons that may move us to desire that it take effect, ought also to move them, and in some part the more, considering both their private sureties, their common estate, and the continuance of the religion; all which three points are in more danger from [for] them to uphold than for us. The causes thereof we doubt not but you can enlarge to them, if you see that they do not sufficiently foresee them. We suspend all our actions only upon this, and therefore you can do no greater service than to use speed.

"Your loving friends,
"W. BURGHLEY."³

"From Windsor, the 29th of Sept. 1572."

In the interval between this letter and Killigrew's last despatch, the English envoy had not been idle. He had assured himself of Morton's cordial co-operation in the scheme for having Mary secretly executed; and, according to the instructions received from his own court, he had availed himself of the

³ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 394. This letter being a first draft by Cecil, is signed only by him.

deep and general horror occasioned by the late murders in France to excite animosity against the papists, and to convince all ranks that, without the most determined measures of defence, their lives and their religion would fall a sacrifice to the fury of their enemies.¹ He also had seen and consulted with Knox, who, although so feeble that he could scarce stand alone, was as entire in intellect and resolute in action as ever. The picture given of this extraordinary man by Killigrew, in a letter addressed to Cecil and Leicester, written on the 6th of October, in reply to theirs of the 29th of September, is very striking. "I trust," said he, "to 'satisfy Morton; and as for John Knox, that thing, you may see by my despatch to Mr Secretary, is done, and doing daily; the people in general well bent to England, abhorring the fact in France, and fearing their tyranny. John Knox," he continued, "is now so feeble as scarce can he stand alone, or speak to be heard of any audience; yet doth he every Sunday cause himself to be carried to a place, where a certain number do hear him, and preacheth with the same vehemency and zeal that ever he did. He doth reverence your lordship much, and willed me once again to send you word that he thanked God he had obtained at His hands that the gospel of Jesus Christ is truly and simply preached through Scotland, which doth so comfort him as now he desireth to be out of this miserable life. He further said, that it was not of your lordship's² that he was not a great bishop in England; but the effect grown in Scotland, he being an instrument, doth much more satisfy him. He desired me to make his last commendations most humbly unto your lordship, and withal, that he prayed God to increase His strong spirit in you, saying, that there was never more need."³

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, Sept. 29, 1572. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester.

² The meaning is, I think, "that it was from no fault of your lordship's:" that is, of Burghley.

³ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C.

It was, no doubt, by Knox's advice that proclamation was made, on the 3d of October, for a convention of the "professors of the true religion," to consult upon the dangers resulting from the conspiracies of the papists. To the sheet on which it was printed there were added certain heads or articles, said to be extracts from the secret contract between the pope, the emperor, and the kings of Spain and Portugal, for the extirpation of the Protestant faith;⁴ and Killigrew believed that all these preliminaries would prepare the mind of the people for any extremities that might be used against their unhappy sovereign.

Meanwhile his tool, the Abbot of Dunfermline, was secretly trafficking with Morton and the regent, and so far succeeded, that on the 9th of October a conference on the proposed execution of Mary was held at Dalkeith, in Morton's bed-chamber, he being still confined by sickness. None were present but the regent Mar and Killigrew, who immediately communicated the result to Cecil and Leicester in the following letter:—

"My singular good lords,—What has past here since my last, touching the common cause, I have written to Mr Secretary at length.

"Now for the great matter ye wot of. At my being at Dalkeith with my lord regent's grace, the Earl of Morton and he had conference, and both willing to do the thing you most desire; howbeit, I could have no answer there, but that both thought it the only way and the best way to end all troubles, as it were, in both realms. They told me, notwithstanding, the matter was dangerous, and might come so to pass, as they should draw war upon their heads; and in that case, or rather to stop that peril, they would desire her majesty should enter in league defensive, comprehending therein the cause of religion also.

iii. fol. 370, October 6, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester.

⁴ Broadside, State-paper Office, entitled "Proclamation for a convention of the professors of the true religion," October 3, 1572; printed by Lekprevik, at St Andrews, A.D. 1572.

"We came," he continued, "to nearer terms—to wit, that her majesty should, for a certain time, pay the sum that her highness bestoweth for the keeping of her in England to the preservation of this crown, and take the protection of the young king. All this I heard; and said, if they thought it not profitable for them, and that, if they meant not to will me to write earnestly as their desire, I would not move my pen for the matter; whereat the Earl of Morton raised himself in his bed, and said, that both my lord regent and he did desire it, as a sovereign salve for all their sores; howbeit, it could not be done without some manner of ceremony, and a kind of process, whereunto the noblemen must be called after a secret manner, and the clergy likewise, which would ask some time. Also, that it would be requisite her majesty should send such a convoy with the party, that in case there were people would not like of it, they might be able to keep the field; adding, farther, that if they can bring the nobility to consent, as they hope they shall, they will not keep the prisoner three hours alive, after he come into the bounds of Scotland.¹ But I, leaving of these devices, desired to know, indeed, what they would have me write; and it was answered, that I should know farther of my lord regent's grace here. So as this morning, a little before dinner, going to take my leave of him, as he was going towards Stirling, he told me, touching that matter which was communed upon at Dalkeith, he found it very good, and the best remedy for all diseases, and willed me so to write unto your honours; nevertheless, that it was of great weight, and therefore he would advise him of the form and manner how it might best be brought to pass, and that known, he would confer more at length with me in the same. Thus took I my leave of him, and find him, indeed, more cold than Morton, and yet seemed glad and desirous to have it come to pass."²

¹ Sic in original.

² MS. Letter, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 373, 374.

Killigrew proceeded to say, in the same letter, that some were of opinion the queen could not be executed without the meeting of parliament, which might be called suddenly, and under pretence of some other business. The reason assigned was, that the Scottish queen had only been condemned as worthy of deposition on the ground of her accession to the murder of her husband; she had not yet been judged to die.³ This proposition met with no encouragement from the English envoy; (a clear proof that a secret and speedy death was the object desired by Elizabeth.) The proposal was, as he hinted, an excuse to delay time, and to agree to it would have been to act contrary to his instructions. The conclusion of his letter I must give in his own words:—

"Although there be that do assure me that the regent hath, after a sort, moved this matter to nine of the best of their party—to wit, that it were fit to make a humble request to the queen's majesty, to have hither the cause of all their troubles and to do, etc., who have consented to him, and that I am also borne in hand, that both he and the Earl of Morton do, by all dexterity, proceed in the furtherance thereof, yet can I not assure myself of anything, because I see them so inconstant, so divided. . . . I am also told, that the hostages have been talked of, and that they shall be delivered to our men upon the fields, and the matter despatched within four hours, so as they shall not need to tarry long in our hands; but I like not their manner of dealing, and therefore leave it to your wisdom to consider if you will have me continue to give ear, and advertise [if] I shall: if not, I pray your lordships let me be called hence."⁴

In this last sentence it is impossible not to see that the emphatic "to do, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 9th October 1572.

³ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 374, 375. Killigrew to Lords Burghley and Leicester, October 9, 1572.

⁴ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 375, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, October 9, 1572.

et cetera"—the delivery of the Scottish hostages for the performance of the agreement upon the fields, and the "despatching the matter," that is, having the queen put to death, "within four hours," all shew that both the regent and Morton had given their full consent to the proposal. Measures were to be taken to have the sentence pronounced, (if, indeed, any ceremony of a sentence was seriously contemplated,) and the execution hurried over with the utmost expedition and economy: and the only cause of delay on the part of the regent and his brother earl was the selfish wish of making the most profit of this cruel bargain.

Four days after this, on the 13th of October, Killigrew sent another secret packet to Leicester and Burghley. He had again been at Dalkeith, and found not only Morton "very hot and earnestly bent in the matter," but "the two ministers" equally eager in the business. From the cautious manner in which the English envoy wrote, the names of these two ministers are suppressed, and in such a case conjecture is unsatisfactory. We know that Mr Nicholas Elphinston, and Pitcairn, the Abbot of Dunfermline, were the instruments already employed by Morton and Killigrew in this dark negotiation, and it is possible that they are here meant. Two other facts also are certain, from a letter of the English envoy: the one, that Cecil had enjoined him to avail himself of the co-operation of the Kirk in accomplishing the objects of his negotiation; the other, that he had already consulted John Knox, who, even in "extreme debility," and, as he describes it, "with one foot in the grave," was in mind as active as ever. From a letter already quoted, we have seen his convictions of Mary's guilt, and wishes for her execution; he may, therefore, have been one of the ministers to whom allusion is made. But this is speculation; and, after all, it might be argued that, from the words of Killigrew, the matter he spoke of to Knox was not the execution of Mary, as the former

private interview may have solely related to the best method of exciting the people against France and the Catholic faction in Scotland.

However this may be, the English ambassador was informed by Morton that if Mar shewed coldness, or delayed to execute the matter, it should be done without him; and he added, that as he was lieutenant-general of the whole kingdom on this side Tay, he had power to carry it into execution.¹ He hinted, however, that if Elizabeth hoped to gain this great object, she must be more cordial in her support, and more generous in her advances. Her refusal to assist them, and her coldness, had already, he said, alienated some hearts, though not his. To this Killigrew shrewdly replied, that if Morton could at this moment have given some good assurance that Mary should be executed, or, as he expressed it in his dark language, for the performance "of the great matter," then he might safely reckon on the Queen of England for the satisfying his desires; but he must recollect that its accomplishment was the sole ground on which a defensive league between the two countries could be negotiated. Without it "a man could promise nothing."²

From the ambassador's next letter, however, any anticipated coldness or disinclination on the part of Mar appears to have entirely vanished. It was written from Stirling, and informed Burghley and Leicester that the regent, after some general observations on the subject of the peace, began to speak, "touching the great matter, wherein," said he, "I found him very earnest." "He had sent," he said, "his resolute mind to the Lord Morton by the abbot, and desired him (Killigrew) to write speedily to Burghley and Leicester, that they might further the same by all possible

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 376, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 13th October 1572.

² MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 376, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 13th October 1572.

means, as the only salve for the cure of the great sores of the commonwealth." "I perceive," added Killigrew, "that the regent's first coldness grew rather for want of skill how to compass so great a matter, than for lack of good-will to execute the same. He desired me also to write unto your honours to be suitors unto your majesty for some relief of money towards the payment of his soldiers."¹

It is very striking that, in the midst of these dark practices, and when he had not only consented to Mary's death, but pressed that it should be speedy, Mar was himself struck with mortal sickness, and died at Stirling on the 28th of October, within ten days after his interview with the English ambassador.² Previous to this event, however, he and Morton had sent to Killigrew, by the Abbot of Dunfermline, the conditions on which they were ready to rid Elizabeth of her rival. They stipulated that the Queen of England should take the young king their sovereign under her protection; they demanded a declaration from the English parliament that his rights should not be prejudged by any sentence or process against his mother; they required that there should be a defensive league between England and Scotland; and that the Earls of Huntingdon, Bedford, or Essex, accompanied with two or three thousand of her majesty's men of war, should assist at the execution. These troops were afterwards to join the young king's forces in reducing the castle of Edinburgh. This fortress, when recovered from the enemy, was to be delivered to the regent, and all arrears then due to the Scottish forces were to be paid by England.

With these conditions Killigrew was grievously disappointed. He instantly, however, sent them by Captain Arrington, a confidential messenger, to Burghley, accompanied by a

letter, in which he mentioned Mar's extreme danger, but gave some little hope of life. At the moment, however, when this was written at Edinburgh the regent had expired at Stirling, and Burghley received the account of his death, and the "Articles of agreement touching the great matter," almost at the same instant. Although commonly of a calm and collected temper, his agitation on the present occasion seems to have been extreme. The articles themselves were such as he had little expected—the price of blood demanded by the Scottish earls was unreasonably high; and he felt indignant at Killigrew that he should ever have received such proposals. But even if it had not been so, the death of Mar rendered it impossible to carry them into execution with the speed the necessity required; and he immediately wrote to Leicester, informing him of the total failure of their Scottish project, and emphatically remarking that the queen must now fall back upon her last resource for the safety of herself and her kingdom. What this was he shrunk from stating in express words, but he knew that Leicester could supply them; and there is not the slightest doubt that he alluded to the execution of Mary in England. His letter, however, is too characteristic to be omitted. It is wholly in his own hand.

"My Lord,—This bearer came to me an hour and-a-h[alf] after your departure. The letters which he brought me are here included. I now see the queen's majesty hath no surety but as she hath been counselled, for this way that was meant for dealing with Scotland is, you may see, neither now possible, nor was by their articles made reasonable. If her majesty will continue her delays for providing for her own surety by just means given to her by God, she and we all shall vainly call upon God when the calamity shall fall upon us. God send her majesty strength of spirit to preserve God's cause, her own life, and the lives of millions of good subjects, all which are most

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 19th October 1572, Stirling.

² See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXV. Letter of Killigrew on the death of Mar.

manifestly in danger, and that only by her delays : and so, consequently, she shall be the cause of the overthrow of a noble crown and realm, which shall be a prey to all that can invade it. God be merciful to us."¹

Thus was Burghley and Leicester's project for Mary's secret execution by the hands of her own subjects destroyed by the death of Mar, at the moment he had consented to it ; and the scheme which these cruel and unscrupulous politicians conceived themselves to have so deeply laid, on which they pondered, as Cecil owned, " daily and almost hourly," entirely discomfited and cast to the winds.

Mary in the meantime was herself unconscious of the danger she had escaped ; and indeed it is worthy of

observation, that so well had the English ambassador kept his counsel, and so true were the conspirators to their secret, that after a concealment of nearly three centuries, these dark intrigues, with all their ramifications, have now for the first time been made a portion of our national history.² Another base transaction stains the history of this year. During Morton's exile in England the Earl of Northumberland had been his kindest friend : Northumberland himself was now a captive in Scotland, under the charge of Morton ; but, instead of a return of benefits, this base and avaricious man sold his unhappy prisoner to Elizabeth, who shortly after had him executed at York.³

CHAPTER XI.

REGENCY OF MORTON.

1572—1573.

THE death of Mar, over which there hung some suspicion of poison, threw Killigrew, the English ambassador, into much perplexity ;⁴ and Burghley, who had received the news as early as the 3d of November, wrote on that day to Walsingham, the English ambassador at the French court, in much anxiety. "The 28th of the last," said he, "the good regent of Scotland is dead, as I think by a natural sickness, and yet the certainty is not known. This will make our causes the worse in Scotland, for I fear the conveyance away of the king ; and yet there is care taken for his surety ; but I can

almost hope for no good, seeing our evils fall by heaps, and why the heaps

³ Dr Robertson not having access to the State-paper Office, had not seen the letters of Killigrew and Burghley, which unveil this part of Mary's history. He consequently falls into the error of stating that Mar, from his honourable feelings, instantly rejected Killigrew's proposal of bringing Mary to her trial in Scotland, pronouncing her guilty, and executing her. All subsequent historians, amongst the rest the acute and learned Lingard, have been misled by this view of the transaction. Killigrew and Burghley's letters have at length given us the truth. No trial, it appears to me, was ever contemplated ; although, to use Morton's words, "a kind of process" was to be used after a secret manner, (*supra*, p. 350) and Mar, though at first cold in the matter, at last gave his full consent to Mary's being put to death as speedily and secretly as possible.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, 1st May 1572. *Ibid.* Mar to Hunsdon, 23d May 1572. *Also Ibid.* Hunsdon to Burghley, 29th May 1572. Camden, p. 445. Gonzalez, p. 376.

fall not upon ourselves personally, I see no cause to let thereof in ourselves. God be merciful to us."¹ . . .

Elizabeth, who felt the importance of the event, and dreaded the success of French money and intrigues in Scotland, lost not a moment in taking measures to preserve her party. She wrote to the Countess of Mar, recommending her to watch over the safety of the young prince, her dear relative, in whose welfare she took the deepest interest; and she sent a flattering letter to the Earl of Morton, in which, with unusual condescension, she addressed him as if already regent, calling him her well-beloved cousin, commending the wisdom with which he had governed himself in times past, in seasons of great difficulty, and expressing her hope that he and the nobility would take measures for the safety of the young king and the repose of the realm. For more particulars she referred him to Killigrew, her ambassador; and alluding to the necessity of appointing a new regent, trusted that the election would not disturb the quiet of the country.²

These were politic steps, as Morton was undoubtedly at this time the most able and powerful of the nobility. Even under Mar he had regulated every public measure; and when it was certain that the regent was on his death-bed, the whole administration of affairs seems naturally to have devolved on him.³ He was supported by the great majority of the nobles, by the influential party of the Church, and by the friendship of England. Against such influence the Castilians and their friends could do little; and after a feeble opposition, he was chosen regent in a parliament held at Edinburgh on the 24th of November, and proclaimed next day with the usual solemnity.⁴

¹ MS. Letter, Vespasian, F. vi. fol. 181 d. Burghley to Walsingham, 3d November 1572.

² Copy, State-paper Office, Elizabeth to Morton, 4th November 1572.

³ MS. Letter, Caligula, B. viii. fol. 300, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 29th October 1572.

⁴ Copy, State-paper Office, Killigrew to the Queen, 2d December 1572. See MS., State-

At this parliament Elizabeth's letters to the Scottish nobility were publicly read; and although these were not so decided in their language as her partisans had desired, there can be little doubt that the knowledge of her favour to Morton produced the greatest influence. On informing his royal mistress, and her minister Burghley, of the late events, Killigrew earnestly advised some more effectual assistance to be sent to the new regent. He had in vain endeavoured to induce the two factions to refer their controversies to Elizabeth. The Castilians were still confident in the strength of their fortress, and looked to speedy aid from France; Morton, on the other hand, although he admitted the desirableness of peace, had invariably asserted that to storm the castle and utterly subdue the king's enemies would be the only means to establish a firm government, and restore security alike to Scotland and England. But it was evident that this could not be done without some effectual assistance. The regent and the nobles were too poor to maintain any sufficient body of troops on their own resources, and the danger seemed to be, that if not supported by Elizabeth, they would look to France.

"This regent," said Killigrew, in his letter to Burghley, "is a shrewd fellow; and I fear little Douglas be not come home out of France without some offers to him among others; howbeit, hitherto, I can perceive nothing at all, for he assured me still to run the course of England as much as ever regent did. Notwithstanding I see not how he can make war till the parliament be ended, though he had aid of money, and that for two reasons: the one, the parliament is appointed in this town, which cannot well be holden, because of the castle, if it were war, and the parliament must of necessity be holden for many weighty reasons; the other is the regent's indisposition, as he is not likely to travel for a month or two, but rather to keep his bed or chamber paper Office, 19th Nov. 1572, Noblemen and others met at the convention in Edinburgh.

under the surgeon's care, for a disease that hath much troubled him this five or six years."¹

A few days after the despatch of this letter, Killigrew made a rapid journey to Berwick to hold a conference with Sir William Drury on Scottish matters, and obtain his advice and assistance. He was recalled suddenly, however, to Edinburgh, by a report of Morton's extreme danger, but found him much recovered, and soon after had the satisfaction of receiving an assurance from England, that the queen had determined to give effective support to the new regent both in money and troops.² Of the money, part was instantly paid down; and, by Elizabeth's directions, two skilful engineers, Johnson and Fleming, repaired to Edinburgh and examined the strength of the castle. They reported that, with a proper force and battering trains, it might be taken in twenty days; and it was resolved, as soon as the season of the year permitted, to begin the siege.

It was in the midst of these transactions, and on the very day on which Morton was chosen regent, that the celebrated reformer Knox died, in his house at Edinburgh.³ He was scarcely to be called an aged man, not having completed his sixty-seventh year; but his life had been an incessant scene of theological and political warfare, and his ardent and restless intellect had worn out a frame which at no period had been a strong one.

There is perhaps no juster test of a great man than the impression which he has left, or the changes he has wrought upon his age; and, under this view, none is more entitled to this appellation than Knox, who has been deservedly regarded as the father of the Reformation in Scotland. The

history of his life is indeed little else than the history of this great religious revolution; and none can deny him the praise of courage, integrity, and indefatigable exertion in proclaiming that system of truth which he believed to be founded upon the Word of God. To this he was faithful to the last; and although it appears to me that on many occasions he acted upon the principle (so manifestly erroneous and antichristian) that the end justified the means, on no one occasion do we find him influenced by selfish or venal motives. In this respect he stands alone, and pre-eminent over all men with whom he laboured. To extirpate a system which in its every part he believed to be false and idolatrous, and to replace it by another of which he was as firmly persuaded that it was the work of God, seems to have been the master passion of his mind. In the accomplishment of this, none who has studied the history of the times, or his own writings, will deny that he was often fierce, unrelenting, and unscrupulous; but he was also disinterested, upright, and sincere. He neither feared nor flattered the great; the pomp of the mitre, or the revenues of the wealthiest diocese, had no attractions in his eyes; and there cannot be a doubt of his sincerity, when, in his last message to his old and long-tried friend, Lord Burghley, he assured him that he counted it higher honour to have been made the instrument that the gospel was simply and truly preached in his native country than to have been the highest prelate in England.

During his last illness his time was wholly occupied in offices of devotion, and in receiving the visits of a few religious friends, who affectionately assisted his family in the attendance which his feeble and helpless condition required. A few days before his death, he sent for Mr David Lindsay, Mr James Lawson, and the elders and deacons of the church,¹ and raising himself in his bed, addressed them in these solemn words:—"The time is approaching for which I have long

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, Dec. 10, 1572, Edinburgh.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir William Drury to Burghley, 21st December 1572. Great secrecy was to be used in the delivery of the money to Morton. The sum was £2500, to be defrayed in extraordinary causes. Original, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir Valentine Brown to Lord Burghley, 26th December 1572.

³ Bannatyne's Memorials, p. 280.

⁴ Bannatyne's Memorials, pp. 264, 283.

thirsted, wherein I shall be relieved of all cares, and be with my Saviour Christ for ever. And now God is my witness, whom I have served with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the gospel; and that the end I proposed in all my preaching was to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the weak, to comfort the consciences of those who were humbled under the sense of their sins; and bear down, with the threatenings of God's judgments, such as were proud and rebellious. I am not ignorant that many have blamed, and yet do blame, my too great rigour and severity; but God knows, that in my heart I never hated the persons of those against whom I thundered God's judgments. I did only hate their sins, and laboured at all my power to gain them to Christ. That I forbore none of whatsoever condition, I did it out of the fear of my God, who had placed me in the function of the ministry, and I knew would bring me to an account. Now, brethren, for yourselves, I have no more to say, but that you take heed to the flock over whom God hath placed you overseers, and whom He hath redeemed by the blood of His only-begotten Son. And you, Mr Lawson, [this was his successor,] fight a good fight. Do the work of the Lord with courage and with a willing mind; and God from above bless you and the church whereof you have the charge: against it, so long as it continueth in the doctrine of the truth, the gates of hell shall not prevail."¹

During his illness he continued to exhibit all his wonted interest in public affairs, often bewailed the defection of Grange, one of his oldest friends, and sent a message to him, which at the time was regarded as almost prophetic. "Go," said he, addressing Lindsay, the minister of Leith, "to yonder man in the castle, whom you know I have loved so dearly, and tell him that I have sent you yet once more to warn him, in the name of God, to leave that evil cause. . . .

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 265, 266. Bannatyne's Memorials, p. 283.

Neither the craggy rock in which he miserably confides, nor the carnal prudence of that man [meaning the Secretary Lethington] whom he esteems a demi-god, nor the assistance of strangers, shall preserve him; but he shall be disgracefully dragged from his nest to punishment, and hung on a gallows against the face of the sun, unless he speedily amend his life and flee to the mercy of God."²

It appears to me that, in this and other similar predictions, the dying Reformer, who was not only intimately acquainted with, but personally engaged in, the secret correspondence between his party and England, availed himself of this knowledge to fulminate his threats and warnings, which he knew the advance of the English army was so soon likely to fulfil.

During this time his weakness rapidly increased, and on Friday the 21st of November he desired his coffin to be made. The succeeding Saturday and Sunday were spent by him almost uninterruptedly in meditation and prayer, in pious ejaculations, and earnest advices addressed to his family and friends. On Monday the 24th these sacred exercises were resumed till he was exhausted and fell into a slumber, from which he awoke to have the evening prayers read to him. "About eleven o'clock [I use the words of his excellent biographer] he gave a deep sigh, and said, 'Now, it is come;' upon which Richard Bannatyne, his faithful friend and secretary, drew near, and desired him to think of those comfortable promises of our Saviour Christ which he had so often declared to others; and perceiving that he was speechless, requested him to give them a sign that he heard them, and died in peace. Upon this he lifted up one of his hands, and sighing twice, expired without a struggle."³ The Reformer was twice married. By his first wife, Mrs Mary Bowes, he left two sons, Nathanael and Eleazer, who were educated

² M'Crie's Life, by Crichton, pp. 300, 302. Melvil's Diary, p. 27.

³ M'Crie's Life, by Crichton, p. 309. Bannatyne, p. 289.

in England, and both died without issue: it is remarkable that Eleazer entered the English Church. By his second marriage, with Margaret Stewart, the daughter of Lord Ochiltree, he left three daughters, Martha, Margaret, and Elizabeth, all of whom married, but the research of his able biographer has not detected any descendants.¹

The death of Knox was followed by the complete recovery of Morton and the renewal of the war, after a vain attempt to prolong the truce.² But although hostilities recommenced, a parliament assembled in the capital, the house where it met being protected from the fire of the castle by a bulwark; and in this, after the election of the regent had been confirmed by the three estates, all measures adopted since the coronation of the young king were ratified, and every proceeding that had been conducted in the name of the captive queen declared invalid and treasonable. Measures, also, were taken to urge forward a reconciliation between the regent and such of the nobility as had not yet acceded to his government. Of these the greatest were the Duke of Chastelherault, the whole of the Hamiltons, Argyle, Huntly, and his gallant brother, Sir Adam Gordon, who still maintained his ascendancy in the north. With a view to facilitate an accommodation, it was secretly resolved that for the present no inquiry into the murder of the late king should take place, nor any prosecution be instituted against such persons as were suspected of this crime. The regent was also empowered to pardon all persons accessory to the death of the Earl of Lennox.³

The object of all this was quite apparent. Morton himself, Huntly, Argyle, and Sir James Balfour, (who had lately deserted his friends in the castle,) were all of them concerned in the murder of Darnley; whilst the assassination of Lennox, the late regent, was as certainly the work of the Hamiltons. Any resolution to prosecute

the perpetrators of either crime must have at once put an end to the hopes of a reconciliation, and it was determined for the present to say and do nothing upon either subject.⁴

During the first sitting of the parliament Killigrew was absent at Berwick, whither he had gone for the purpose of consulting with Sir William Drury and expediting the preparations for the approaching siege of the castle. Before his departure, however, he had a meeting with Nicholas Elphinston on the "great matter," or, to speak more plainly, the secret project for having Mary executed,—a subject which, although interrupted by Mar's decease, appears to have been resumed on the election of Morton. It seemed, however, that this dark design of Elizabeth, by which she hoped to rid herself of her enemy without her hand appearing in the transaction, was invariably destined to be thwarted. We have just seen that, for the security of Huntly, Argyle, and the regent himself, it had been resolved to accuse no person of the murder, and the same prudent considerations made it expedient, at this moment, to say and do nothing against the queen. In a letter addressed at this time by Elphinston to Killigrew, this is clearly explained. "The other matter," said he, "I doubt not, you know perfectly well, cannot nor may not at this time be touched, because presently the murder may not be spoken of, seeing some suspected thereof to be in terms of appointment, as I shall at meeting cause you more clearly to understand; but of this matter I trust hereafter shortly to see a good beginning."⁵

In this parliament a conference took place between the Kirk and certain commissioners appointed by the three estates, in which an important ecclesiastical measure was carried. This was the confirmation of that order for the election of bishops, which had

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Jan. 26, 1572-3. Notes and titles of Acts as were passed in the parliament began at Edinburgh, Jan. 15, 1572.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, N. Elphinston to Killigrew, January 17, 1572-3.

¹ Life of Knox, pp. 326, 327.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, January 1, 1572-3, Killigrew to Burghley.

³ Supra, p. 341.

been drawn up in the Book of Discipline, devised at Leith many years before. The change amounted to nothing less than the establishment of Episcopacy in the Scottish Church. It was decided that the title and office of archbishop and bishop should be continued as in the time which preceded the Reformation, and that a spiritual jurisdiction should be exercised by the bishops in their respective dioceses. It was determined that all abbots, priors, and other inferior prelates who were presented to benefices, should be tried by the bishop, or superintendent of the diocese, concerning their fitness to represent the Church in parliament, and that to such bishoprics as were presently void, or which should become vacant, the king and regent should take care to recommend qualified persons, whose election should be made by the chapters of their cathedral churches. It was also ordered that all benefices with cure under prelacies should be disposed of to ministers, who should receive ordination from the bishop of the diocese, upon their taking an oath to recognise the authority of the king, and to pay canonical obedience to their ordinary.¹

In the midst of these proceedings Killigrew returned to Edinburgh, and on the succeeding day was admitted to an audience of the parliament. The message which he delivered, and the assurances he conveyed of the determination of his royal mistress to protect the young king and support

¹ Spottiswood, p. 260. Mr David Lindsay, a minister and commissioner, communicated these important measures to Killigrew in a letter written during the sitting of the conference, and when the guns of the castle were thundering in their ears. Its concluding sentence is worthy of notice, as it seems to shew that Killigrew had still in view such measures as he judged necessary for the prosecution of the “great matter” confided to him. “The article which your lordship desired me to remember, touching the murder, is not like to pass, lest it should hold back some that are willing to come to composition. I cannot tell how long the parliament shall last, but I suppose all will be ended this next Wednesday at the farthest. This day the castle has declared their ill-will with great shooting and little harm.” . . . MS. Letter, State-paper Office, David Lindsay to Mr Killigrew, Leith, 16th January 1572-3.

the government of the regent, produced an immediate effect; and a convention for a general pacification was soon after held at Perth, between commissioners appointed by the regent on the one side, and Huntly and the Lord of Arbroath, as the representative of the Duke of Chastelherault, on the other. It was attended by the English ambassador, in whose lodging the conferences took place, and who exerted himself so successfully to compose all subjects of difference, that at last a complete reconciliation was effected. “And now,” said the successful diplomatist to Lord Burghley, “there remaineth but the castle to make the king universally obeyed, and this realm united, which, peradventure, may be done without force after the accord; notwithstanding, in my simple opinion, which I submit unto your honour’s wisdom, it standeth with more reason and policy for her majesty to hasten the aid rather now than before this conference. I mean, so that it may be ready, if need require, to execute; otherwise not.”²

At this moment the fortunes of the Castilians (so Grange and the queen’s party were called) seemed reduced to the lowest ebb, and disaster after disaster threatened to bring total ruin upon their cause. Verac, who had been commissioned to bring them relief from the French king, was driven by a tempest into Scarborough, and detained in England. Sir James Kirkaldy, Grange’s brother, who had landed at the castle of Blackness, with a large supply of money, arms, and military stores, was betrayed and seized; whilst the castle itself fell into the hands of the regent.³ The example of Huntly and the Hamiltons, in acceding to the king’s authority, was speedily followed by the submission of the Lords Gray, Oliphant, the Sheriff of Ayr, and the Lairds of Buccleuch and Johnston; whilst in the north Huntly undertook to bring over to terms his gallant

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 18th Feb. 1572, Killigrew to Burghley.

³ Historie of James the Sext, p. 127. It was betrayed to the enemy by the treachery of the wife of Sir James Kirkaldy.

brother, Sir Adam Gordon, who, during the conferences at Perth, had surprised and routed the king's adherents at Aberdeen. With this view the indefatigable Killigrew had hurried from Perth to the capital, where he obtained the regent's signature to the articles of pacification.¹

Even under all these gloomy appearances, the spirit of Grange was unbroken, and the resources of Lethington undiminished. A long experience of the parsimony of Elizabeth had persuaded them that she would never submit to the expense of sending an army and a battering train into Scotland. They looked with confidence to the arrival of assistance from France, and trusted that, even if long delayed, the strength of their walls would still bid defiance to the enemy.²

For a brief season these sanguine anticipations seemed to be realised; and the Queen of England, at the moment when Burghley imagined he had convinced her of the necessity of sending her forces into Scotland, began to waver. She dreaded bringing on a war with France; represented to her council the great expense and hazard of the siege; and asserted that Morton ought to be able to reduce it without her assistance. Killigrew was in despair. He wrote instantly, that if the expedition were abandoned, Scotland would be lost to them, and as surely united in a league with France. Everything, he contended, proved this. Lord Seton had been already negotiating with the regent to win him to France. What had been Verac's late commission? To corrupt the garrison of Dumbarton, to bribe the governors of the young king, and to convey him out of Scotland. What was Stephen Wilson's message out of France, when he was lately seized, and his letters to the captain of the castle of Edinburgh intercepted? Did he not bring assur-

ances from the French king and the Bishop of Glasgow, Mary's ambassador in Paris; and had he not confessed the Pope's designs, and that of the rest of the Romish league, to be mainly directed against England and Scotland? Nay, were not the papal coffers already unlocked, and the man's name known who was shortly to bring the money, and begin the attack? And would her majesty shut her eyes to all this, and this too at the very crisis when a decided effort, and no very great sum, might enable her to confound these plans and secure her ground in Scotland? Would she countermand her army, and abandon the advantages which were within her reach, or rather which she had already secured? "If so," said the ambassador, in the end of an eloquent letter to Burghley, "God's will be done. For mine own part, if this castle be not recovered, and that with expedition, I see, methinks, the beginning of sorrows, and her majesty's peaceable reign hitherto, decaying as it were in post, which God of His mercy defend. The reasons be so apparent, as I need not to trouble your honour with them, whose shoulders, next her majesty's, shall not carry the least burthen, and therefore I pray God send you strength to overcome."³

These arguments produced the desired effect; Elizabeth's parsimonious fears gave way under the alarming arguments of her ambassador; and orders were despatched to Sir William Drury, who had been chosen to command the enterprise, to have everything in readiness for the march of the army and the transport of the cannon at a moment's notice. A last attempt to bring the Castilians to terms was now made by the Earl of Rothes; but it led to no result. Kirkaldy and Lethington declared that, though deserted by all their friends, they would keep the castle to the last; and on the 25th of April the English army, consisting of five hundred halberdiers, and a hundred and forty pikemen, entered the capital. They were

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, February 23, 1572-3. "God so blessed this treaty, as this day, being the 23d aforenoon, the Articles of Accord and Pacification were signed."

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, 23d Feb. 1572-3. Lord Lethington and Grange to the Earl of Huntly.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 9th March, 1572-3, Killigrew to Burghley.

joined by seven hundred soldiers of the regent's; and the battering train having at the same time arrived by sea, the operations of the siege commenced.

In the midst of these martial transactions, the regent assembled a parliament, which confirmed the league with England, ratified the late pacification, restored Huntly and Sir James Balfour to their estates and honours, and pronounced a sentence of treason and forfeiture against the Castilians. A summons of surrender was then sent to Grange in the name of Morton and of the English general,¹ and operations for undermining the "Spur" or blockhouse, and erecting batteries on the principal spots which commanded the walls, proceeded with little interruption from the besieged. Their obstinacy, indeed, was surprising, and can only be accounted for by the extraordinary influence which Lethington possessed, and his fatal conviction that succours would yet arrive from France. His power over Kirkaldy was described by Killigrew as something like enchantment; and although Robert Melvil, Pitarrow, and other leading men, would fain have come to terms; though they argued that their powder and ammunition were exhausted, their victuals and supply of water on the point of failing, and their distress increasing every moment; still the governor declared he would hold the castle till he was buried in its ruins.

On the 2d of May, Killigrew, who himself assisted in the trenches, wrote thus to Burghley:—"Yesterday I did advertise your honour of the end of the parliament. This day, Sir Henry Ley, with his company, dined with the regent; and upon Monday, the 4th of this month, the general doth intend to begin to plant his batteries. They within make good show, and fortify continually to frustrate the first battery, although the regent and others here be of opinion that they will

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, April 25, 1573, Sir W. Drury's Summons. Also *ibid.*, the Regent's Summons, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, April 27, 1573. Also MS., *ibid.* Acts of the Parliament, 30th April 1573.

never abide the extremity. Their water will soon be taken from them when the ordnance shall be laid both within and without. Hope of succour there is none, and therefore their obstinacy must needs be vain. I send your lordship the roll of their names within, both tag and rag; and, as I am informed, eighteen of the best of them would fain be out."² All such hopes of escape, however, were now utterly vain, for Drury perceived his advantage, and Morton had determined to receive nothing but an unconditional surrender. In England the result of the siege was regarded with deep interest, and many young cavaliers, amongst whom was Thomas Cecil, Burghley's eldest son, repaired from the English court to join the army and work in the trenches.

On the 17th of May the batteries were completed, and, beginning to play upon the principal bastion, named David's Tower, were answered by a long and loud shriek from the women in the castle, which was distinctly heard in the English camp. "This day," (17th May,) said Killigrew in one of his journal letters to Burghley, "at one of the clock in the afternoon, some of our pieces began to speak such language as it made both them in the castle, I am sure, think more of God than they did before; and all our men, and a great many others, think the enterprise not so hard as before they took it to be.... I trust, to be short, that after the battery shall be outlaid, which, as they say, will be ready by the twenty-first of this month, the matter will be at a point before the end of the same.... Thanks be to God, although it be longsome, it hath hitherto been with the least blood that ever was heard in such a case; and this conjecture we have to lead us, that they want store of powder within, for they have suffered us to plant all the ordnance, and to shoot yesterday, all the afternoon, without any harm from them."³ . . .

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 2d May 1573, Killigrew to Burghley.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edin-

From this time till the 23d the cannon played incessantly upon the castle, the guns of the garrison were silenced, and in the afternoon of that day the southern wall of David's Tower fell with a great crash; next day its east quarter, the portcullis and an outer bastion named Wallace Tower, were beaten down; and on the 26th the English, with little resistance, stormed the "Spur" or blockhouse.¹ Preparations were now made for a general assault; and Morton, who had determined to lead the Scottish forces, was exulting in the near prospect of laying hands upon his victims, when to his mortification Grange presented himself on the wall with a white rod in his hand, and obtained, from his old friend and fellow-soldier Drury, an abstinence of two days, preparatory to a surrender. This was in the evening, and a meeting immediately took place between Grange and Robert Melvil on the part of the Castilians, Killigrew and Drury for the Queen of England, and Lord Boyd for the regent. Kirkaldy's requests were, to have surety for their lives and livings, not to be spoiled of their goods within the castle, to have licence for Lord Hume and Lethington to retire into England, and himself to be allowed to remain unmolested in his own country.²

To these conditions Drury would probably have agreed, but they were scornfully rejected by Morton. As to the great body of the garrison, he said he was ready, if they came out singly without arms, and submitted to his mercy, to grant them their lives, and permit them to go where they pleased; but there were nine persons who must be excepted from these conditions: Grange himself, William Maitland of Lethington the secretary,

burgh, Killigrew to Burghley, May 17, 1573. Also Drury to Burghley, May 18, 1573. "After the first tyre of ordnance great cries and shouts was made by the women of the castle, terming the day and hour black."

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, May 28, 1573.

² Ibid., Killigrew to Burghley, May 27, 1573. Also ibid., Sir William Drury to Burghley, May 28, 1572, in which Drury says, "I will not harken unto the request of the Castilians, further than the regent and our ambassador shall allow of."

Alexander Lord Hume, Robert Melvil of Murdochairny, the Bishop of Dunkeld, and the Lairds of Restalrig, Drylaw, and Pitarrow. These must submit themselves unconditionally, and their fate be determined by the Queen of England, according to the treaty already made between her majesty and his sovereign.³

This stern reply made it evident to these unfortunate men, that the regent would be contented with nothing but their lives; and, convinced of this, they rejected his terms, and declared their resolution to abide the worst. But this was no longer in their power, for the soldiers began to mutiny, threatened to hang the secretary over the walls within six hours if he did not advise a surrender, and were ready to deliver the captain and his companions to the enemy.⁴ In this dread dilemma an expedient was adopted, suggested probably by the fertile brain of Lethington. Grange, after refusing the terms in open conference, sent a secret message to Drury, in consequence of which two companies of the besieging force were admitted within the walls on the night of the 29th, and to them in the morning he and his companions surrendered: expressly stating, that they submitted, not to the Regent of Scotland, but to the Queen of England, and her general, Sir William Drury. They were accordingly carried to his quarters; and, notwithstanding some remonstrances upon the part of the regent, received with courtesy.⁵ Morton, however, was not thus to be balked of his prey. He instantly wrote to

³ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, "The regent's answer to the Castilians," May 28, 1573. Also, State-paper Office, copy, "Conditions of rendering the castle."

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, June 20, 1573.

⁵ Ibid., Sir William Drury to Burghley, Leith, June 5, 1573. There is a passage in his letter which is curious. He says, "By computation there hath been near 3000 great shot bestowed against the castle in this service, and the bullets of all or the most part recovered, and brought again, part by our own labours, and part by the Scots, paying to the Scottish people a piece of their coin called a *bawbee* for every bullet, which is in value English, one penny and a quarter."

Burghley, warning him that the chief authors of all the mischief were now remaining, without condition, in the hands of Elizabeth's ministers, entreating the queen's immediate decision upon their fate, and requesting them to be delivered to him, that they might suffer for their crimes.¹ Killigrew, too, had the barbarity to advise their execution; and Drury anxiously awaited his next orders. At this trying moment, Grange and Lethington addressed the following letter to one who had once been knit to them in ties of the strictest friendship, the Lord Treasurer Burghley:—

"MY LORD,—The malice of our enemies is the more increased against us, that they have seen us rendered in the queen's majesty's will, and now to seek refuge at her highness's hands. And, therefore, we doubt not but they will go about by all means possible to procure our mischief; yea, that their cruel minds shall lead them to that impudency to crave our bloods at her majesty's hands. But whatsoever their malice be, we cannot fear that it shall take success; knowing with how gracious a princess we have to do, which hath given so many good proofs to the world of her clemency and mild nature, that we cannot mistrust that the first example of the contrary shall be shewn upon us. We take this to be her very natural, *Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.*

"We have rendered ourselves to her majesty, which to our own countrymen we would never have done, for no extremity [that] might have come. We trust her majesty will not put us out of her hands to make any others, especially our mortal enemy, our masters. If it will please her majesty to extend her most gracious clemency towards us, she may be as assured to have us as perpetually at her devotion as any of this nation, yea, as any subject of her own; for now with honour we may oblige ourselves to her majesty farther than before we might, and her majesty's benefit will bind us per-

petually. In the case we are in we must confess we are of small value; yet may her majesty put us in case, that perhaps hereafter we will be able to serve her majesty's turn, which occasion being offered, assuredly there shall be no inlack of good-will. Your lordship knoweth already what our request is; we pray your lordship to further it. There was never time wherein your lordship's friendship might stand us in such stead. As we have oftentimes heretofore tasted thereof, so we humbly pray you let it not inlack us now, in time of this our great misery, when we have more need than ever we had. Whatsoever our deservings have been, forget not your own good natural. If, by your lordship's mediation, her majesty conserve us, your lordship shall have us perpetually bound to do you service. . . . Let not the misreports of our enemies prevail against us. When we are in her majesty's hands she may make us what pleaseth her. . . . From Edinburgh, the 1st June 1573."²

This letter produced no effect. Elizabeth, indeed, did not instantly decide, and requested particular information to be sent her of the "quality and quantity of the prisoners' offences;" but Killigrew and Morton so strongly advised their execution, that the queen commanded them to be delivered up to the regent, to be dealt with as he pleased. This, as she must have known, was equivalent to signing their death-warrant. Before, however, the final order arrived, Lethington died in prison. It was reported that he had swallowed poison; but the rumour was uncertain, and was treated by many as an invention of his enemies.³ Ten days after this, Drury reluctantly complied with the orders of Elizabeth, and delivered Grange, Hume, John Maitland, (Lethington's younger brother,) and Robert Melvil, to the re-

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iv. fol. 86, Lethington and Grange to Lord Burghley, June 1, 1573.

² British Museum, Caligula, C. iv. fol. 97, copy, Elizabeth to Morton, June 9, 1570. Ibid., fol. 101, Killigrew to Burghley, June 12, 1573. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, June 20, 1573.

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iv. fol. 85, dorso, Morton to Burghley, May 31, 1573.

gent;¹ Grange's brother (Sir James Kirkaldy) being already in Morton's hands.

Much interest was now exerted to save the life of Grange, but without success: he had made himself too conspicuous, and his talents for war were much dreaded by his adversaries. A hundred gentlemen, his friends and kinsmen, offered for his pardon to become perpetual servants to the house of Angus and Morton in "bond of manrent," a species of obligation well known in those times, and to pay two thousand pounds to the regent, besides an annuity of three thousand merks; but although Morton's prevailing vice was avarice, he was compelled to resist the temptation, influenced, as he stated in a letter to Killigrew, by the "denunciations of the preachers,"² who cried out that God's plague would not cease till the land were purged with blood. They were aware of the prediction of Knox, so recently uttered upon his death-bed, that Grange should be shamefully dragged from the rock wherein he trusted, and hanged in the face of the sun. The success of Drury had fulfilled the first part, and the violence with which the ministers opposed every intercession for mercy, affords a melancholy proof of their determination that the second head of the reputed prophecy should be as punctually accomplished.

Nor were they disappointed. On the 3d of August, Sir William Kirkaldy and his brother were brought from Holyrood to the cross of Edinburgh, and executed in the presence of an immense concourse of spectators. They were attended on the scaffold by Mr David Lindsay, a martial clergyman of those times, to whose hands, if we may believe Melvil, it was difficult to say whether the Bible or the hagbut were most congenial instruments. Grange received his ministrations with gratitude, and expressed on the scaffold deep penitence for his

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, Leith, June 18, 1573.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Killigrew, August 5, 1573. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXVI. Diurnal of Occurrences, p. 336.

sins and unshaken attachment to his captive sovereign.³

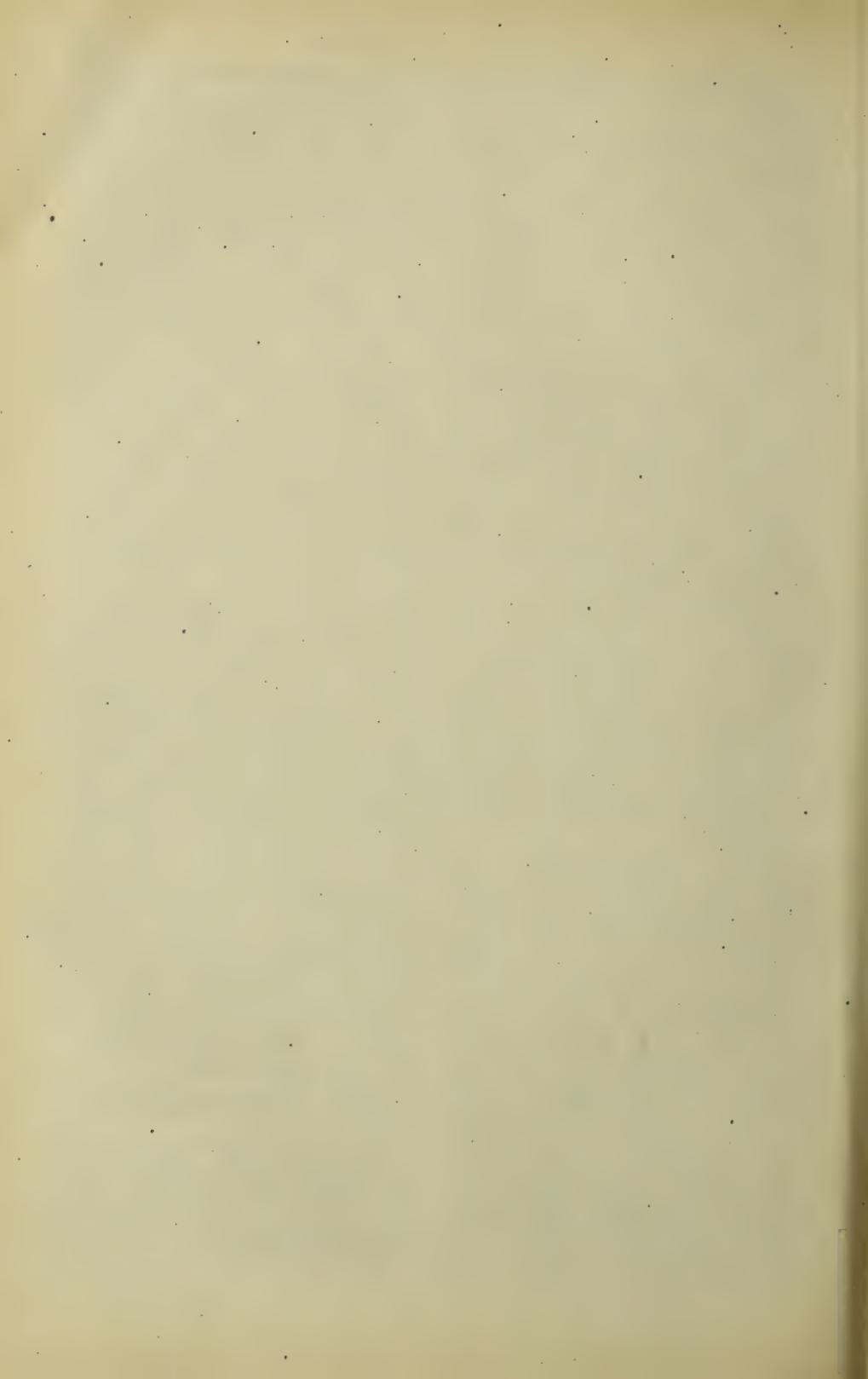
Thus died the famous Laird of Grange, a gentleman who, although his character will not bear examination if we look to consistency and public principle, was justly reputed one of the best soldiers and most accomplished cavaliers of his time.⁴

The year 1573 was thus fatal to the cause of Mary, whose last hope expired with the execution of this brave man, and the surrender of the castle of Edinburgh. In England she had seen all her plans blasted by the death of Norfolk and the imprisonment of the Bishop of Ross: to France she could no longer look for active interference in her behalf, for Elizabeth had recently entered into the defensive treaty of Blois, with that kingdom; and Catherine of Medicis was negotiating a marriage between the English queen and her son the Duke d'Alençon, a proposal hollow indeed, and insincere on both sides, yet, for the time, rendering all interference with Scotland on the part of France unavoidable. Even Spain she could no longer regard with any confidence. The Duke of Alva was the friend and secret correspondent of Burghley and Elizabeth; and although the Roman Catholic refugees in Flanders were incessant in their intrigues, and Philip himself seemed disposed to annoy her on the side of Ireland and Scotland, the influence of this minister effectually counteracted any decided enterprise.⁵ With the death of Kirkaldy, therefore, the reign of Mary properly terminates; for immediately after that event, her last intrepid supporter, Sir Adam Gordon of Auchendown, retired to France; and from that period till her death, no subject dared to acknowledge her as his sovereign.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, August 3, 1573. Melvil's Diary, pp. 26-28.

⁴ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 257. His character of Grange is very expressive. "He was," says he, "humble, gentle, and meek; like a lamb in the house, but a lion in the field; a lusty, stark, and well-proportioned personage, and of a hardy and magnanimous courage." See also Melvil's Diary, p. 28.

⁵ Gonzalez, pp. 370, 371.



NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

LETTER A, page 22.

Cruelty and Impolicy of Henry the Eighth towards Scotland.

THE savage temper of Henry the Eighth nowhere more strongly appears than in the directions which, on the 10th of April 1543-4, he transmitted through a despatch of the Privy-council to the Earl of Hertford. After observing that the grand attempt on Scotland was delayed for a season, they command him, in the meantime, to make an inroad into Scotland, "there to put all to fire and sword, to burn Edinburgh town, and to raze and deface it, when you have sacked it, and gotten what you can out of it, as that it may remain for ever a perpetual memory of the vengeance of God lighted upon it, for their falsehood and disloyalty. Do what you can," continue they, "out of hand, and, without long tarrying, to beat down and overthrow the castle, sack Holyrood House, and as many towns and villages about Edinburgh as ye conveniently can; sack Leith, and burn and subvert it, and all the rest, *putting man, woman, and child, to fire and sword*, without exception, when any resistance shall be made against you; and this done, pass over to the Fife land, and extend like extremities and destructions in all towns and villages whereunto ye may reach conveniently, not forgetting, amongst all the rest, so to spoil and turn upside down the cardinal's town of St Andrews, as the upper stone may be the nether, and not one stick stand by another, sparing no creature alive within the same, specially such as either in friendship or blood be allied to the car-

dinal." "This journey," the despatch goes on to state, "shall succeed most to his majesty's honour."¹

LETTER B, pages 22, 38, 47, and 48.

Historical Remarks on the Assassination of Cardinal Beaton.

The assassination of Cardinal Beaton is an event which has been viewed under very different aspects by different parties. The exultation and unseasonable pleasantry with which Knox relates the murder are partly to be ascribed to the savage times in which he was bred, and to the natural temper of this singular man, which was strongly tintured with a love of the humorous. That he considered the deed as not only justifiable but almost praiseworthy, is evident from the whole tone of his narrative. This mode of writing naturally roused to the highest pitch the indignation of the Roman Catholic party; it was received with equal reprobation by the more moderate Protestants; whilst the Covenanters, driven by the harsh persecution of the government to acts similar in their manner of perpetration, although dictated by higher and less selfish motives, eagerly defended a proceeding which seemed to justify their own. The consequence of this has been, that much vituperation and inconclusive argument were elicited; nor have these angry indications completely subsided in the present day. Such feelings are particularly unpropitious to the investigation of historical truth; and setting them aside entirely, I proceed more fully than was permitted me in the

¹ From the MS. Catalogue of the Hamilton Papers, pp. 44, 45.

text to investigate this subject, and to present my readers with some extracts from those original papers and letters which throw new light upon it, and have hitherto remained unknown.

Dr Mackenzie, in his *Lives of Scottish Writers*, (vol. iii. p. 23,) early observed that the assassination of Beaton had been planned in England, and to corroborate his opinion published from a document, which he affirmed he had seen in the Library of the Faculty of Advocates, an extract from the letter of the Earl of Hertford, dated 17th April 1544, and quoted in my text. When Keith published his history (in 1734) this letter could not be found, and, although he gives it from Mackenzie's work, he declines pronouncing any opinion, aware of that author's great inaccuracy. When Robertson, in 1759, published his *History of Scotland*, he considered the subject so obscure that he satisfied himself with expressing a suspicion that there existed a correspondence between the murderers of Cardinal Beaton and Henry the Eighth; and many years after, when Dr Cook gave to the world his *History of the Reformation*, he got rid of the difficulties attending the question in too summary a manner, by doubting whether such a letter was ever written, or such a person as Wishart, mentioned as the agent of the conspiracy, ever came to the Earl of Hertford, or was sent by him to Henry the Eighth. "The letter," says he, "is entitled to no credit. It was not found by one of our most accurate inquirers into points of history, where the writer who quotes it asserts it may be seen; and what is completely decisive, it was said to have been written two years before the cardinal's death, and could, therefore, have no relation to a conspiracy, which it is apparent was not in existence till within a very short time of its being carried into execution." In a short historical disquisition appended to an early work, (*Life of Sir Thomas Craig*, published in 1823,) I pointed out the errors contained in this passage, and established the authenticity of the letter quoted by Mackenzie, by referring to a direct answer to it which occurred in the collection of original letters and papers published by Haynes, vol. i. p. 34. The fact of the existence of a conspiracy for the assassination of Beaton, which was fostered in England, and carried on by Brunston and Wishart, was thus fixed beyond

question. To crown the whole, it turned out that, after an interval of many years, Dr Robertson had discovered in the MS. collection of the Duke of Hamilton, and had published in the latest edition of his history, the original of the letter quoted by Mackenzie. Thus far had the truth been ascertained, when I was last year permitted by Lord Melbourne to have a full examination of the Scottish correspondence in the State-paper Office, an event which I must consider as one of the most pleasurable in my literary life. This examination is at present only in progress, but the documents I have there found have already enabled me to trace my way through some of the most obscure portions of our national history; and one of these relates to the English conspiracies for the assassination of Cardinal Beaton. I proceed now to point out the singular letters which illustrate the progress of the conspiracy.

It may first, however, be proper to remark that Henry's antipathy to Beaton was early excited, and soon assumed a violent form. On hearing that the cardinal had procured his removal from Lord Seton's house, where he was kept in custody, to St Andrews, the king (not aware that the crafty prelate had by this step completely recovered his liberty) proposed to Sir George Douglas, through Sadler, his ambassador, that he should be brought to England and there kept in sure custody. This was on the 30th March 1543, (Sadler's State-papers, vol. i. pp. 104, 106.) A similar proposal for the apprehension of the cardinal was made on the 21st June 1543, (Sadler, vol. i. p. 221,) which was reiterated in strong terms to Arran the governor by the English monarch on the 4th of August, (Sadler, vol. i. p. 249;) and it appears that Beaton had received warning of these hostile intentions, for, on the 28th of August 1543, he refused to leave his castle of St Andrews for the purpose of meeting with Arran the governor, alleging that he was afraid of his life, (Sadler, vol. i. p. 278.) On the 5th of October, the lords of Henry's party expressed an earnest wish that the cardinal were in the king's majesty's hands, so that he might never more trouble the realm of Scotland, (Sadler, vol. i. p. 312.) This rooted enmity to the cardinal, in the mind of Henry, was well known to Crichton, the Laird of Brunston, a man in whose character we recognise the

ferocity and familiarity with blood which marks the feudal times in which he lived, the cunning and duplicity which is the growth of a more civilised era, and this united to a fanatical spirit which perhaps deceived him into the belief that he was a sincere friend of truth. Busy, unscrupulous, and active, this pliant intriguer insinuated himself into the confidence of all parties, and seems to have been willing at various times to desert all, till the money of England fixed him by the powerful chain of self-interest in the service of Henry the Eighth. We first meet with him as a familiar and confidential servant of Cardinal Beaton, intrusted with secret letters from that dignitary to Rome, (10th December 1539. Sadler, vol. i. p. 25,) which were intercepted by Henry the Eighth. He next attached himself to Arran the governor, who thought him worthy to be trusted in diplomatic missions to France and England, (Sadler, vol. i. pp. 186, 280;) and it would seem that on the 28th of August 1543 Sadler had not much intimacy with him, as he denominates him "a gentleman called the Laird of Brunston." In a few months, however, Brunston had deserted Arran, and so completely gained the confidence both of Sadler and his royal master, that we find him furnishing secret intelligence to the ambassador, and honoured by a letter from the king, (Sadler, vol. i. pp. 332, 338, 339, 342.) On the 16th of November 1543, Brunston thus writes in a letter to Sadler: ". . . I pray your lordship that I may be excused to the king's majesty, and to thank his highness on my behalf of his gentle letter, which it hath pleased his highness to send to me, the contents whereof I shall not fail to fulfil, so far as God will give me grace," (Sadler, vol. i. p. 342.)

Nearly five months after this, on the 17th April 1544, the Laird of Brunston engaged in that secret correspondence with Henry the Eighth, in which, on certain conditions, he offered to procure the assassination of Beaton.¹ As the

purport of both letters has been fully stated in the text, I shall not recapitulate it, but merely observe that, in the plot devised by Brunston, and proposed to be executed by Kirkaldy of Grange and the Master of Rothes, the conspirators do not appear to have acted from

by poste, bothe for the delyvire of such letters as he hathe to your majestie from the said Brunstone, and also for the declaracion of his credence, which, as I can perceyve by him, consisteth in two poynetes; one is, that the Larde of Graunge, late threasurer of Scotlandne, the mr of Rothes, th' Erl of Rothis eldest son, and John Charters, wolde attempt ethyer t' apprehend or seele the cardynall at some tyme when he shall passe thorough the Fyf lande, as he doth sundry times to Sanct Andrewes; and in case they can so apprehende hym, will delyver him unto your majestie, which attemptat, he saythe, they wolde enterpryse if they knew your majestie's pleasure therein, and what supportacion and mayntenance your majestie wolde minister unto them after th' execution of the same, in case they suld be persewed afterwards be any of their enemyes; the other is, that in case your maj. wolde grant unto them a convenient enterteynement for to kepe 15 or 16 men in wages for a moneth or two, they, joyning with the power of th' Erl Marshall, the said Erl of Rothes, the Larde of Calder, and others of the Lords Grey's friends, will tak upon them, at such tyme as your maj. armey sal be in Scotlandne, to destroy the abbey and town of Arbryoth, being the cardynal's and all th' other bishops and abbots houses and countreys on that syde the water thereaboute, and apprehend all those whiche they saye be the principall impugnators of the amyte between England and Scotland, for the whiche they suld have a good opportunytie, as they saye, when the power of the said bishops and abbotte shall resort toward Edinburgh. to resist your majestye's armee. And for th' execution of these thinges, the said Wyshert saith that the sayde Erll Marshall, and others above named, will capitulat with your majestie in wryting under their handes and seales afore they shall desyre any suplye of money at your majes. handes. This is the effect of his credence, with other sundrie advertisements of the great contencion and division that is at this present within the realme of Scotlandne, which we doubt not he will declare unto your majestie at good length.

"Also, I, the said Erll of Hertford, have receyved this daye, certain letters from the Lorde Wharton, and Sir Robert Bowes, with the copies of such letters as were wryten by the Erll of Glencairne's sone, and Bishop the Erll of Lennox's secretary, to be sent into Scotland to the same erilles, which copies the said Lord Wharton and Bowes attayned to such meynes as sal appear unto your majestie by the said letters, whiche, with the said copies, we send also to your highnes here inclosed; together with certain other letters, whiche arryved here also this day

¹ His grace the Duke of Hamilton, many years ago, politely permitted me to copy the original of the letter from the Earl of Hertford, which is in his possession. "Please it your highness to understand, that this daye arryved here with me the Erll of Hertford, a Scotishman called Wyshert, and brought me a letter from the Larde of Brunstone, which I sende your highness herewith; and, according to his request, have taken order for the repayre of the said Wysshert to your majestie

religious, or I should rather say fanatical, motives. No allusion to such is to be found in the correspondence. Their views seem to have been purely selfish and mercenary. The “feat,” however, against the cardinal, for some cause not easily discoverable, was not at this time carried into execution, and the conspiracy slept for nearly a year, when it was again revived by the Earl of Cassillis, the pupil of Buchanan, the convert of Cranmer,¹ and a nobleman who, in their ignorance of his true character, has been highly lauded by some of our historians. This baron, who proved himself one of Henry’s most active instruments, was employed by this monarch, in April 1545, in a negotiation regarding the marriage and the peace, of which an account has been given in the text. Previous to this diplomatic mission, he repaired to the English court from Scotland, and having received his instructions from Henry in person, returned to manage the business in the Scottish parliament. In the State-paper Office there is an original letter, dated April 2, 1545, entirely in cipher, with a contemporary deciphered copy, from the Earl of Cassillis to the king, in which he states that he had a conference with the governor and the cardinal on the subject of his mission, but they would come to no conclusion till the arrival of the queen and the Earls of Argyle and Huntly; and adds, that a convention had been summoned for the 15th, to determine on his offers. On the 20th of April, Cassillis again addressed a letter in cipher to the king, in which he informed him of the total failure of his negotiation, the triumph of the party of the cardinal and the governor, and the

from the Lord ——, conteyning certain exploytes done in Scotland.

“ Fynally—the Lorde Wm. Howard being at Tynemont, sent a letter to me, the said Erll of Hertford, whereby it appeareth that certain of the shippis victuallers are arrivid, and some of theym report that yesterday morning they sawe my Lord Admyrall, west of the fleete on see borde Hull, makynghitherwarde, so that the wind contynuing as it is, they will be at Teynemouth this night or to-morrawe with the grace of God, who preserve your royll majestie in your most prynceley estat, most felicitously to endure unto your highnes.—Newcastel, the xvii. of April.

“ Your Majestie’s humble subjects, and most bounden servants,

“ E. HERTFORD, *Cuth. Duresme.*

“ ROBERT LANDAFFE, RAF SADLEYR.”

¹ Douglas’ Peerage, vol. i. pp. 330, 321.

rejection of peace with England. On the 18th of May 1545, Sir R. Sadler, and the Council of the North, wrote to the king, transmitting a letter in cipher, which the Earl of Cassillis had addressed to Sadler. That the reader may understand the purport of Sadler’s letter, I give an extract from it:—“ Please your royal Majesty to receive herewith such letters as we have received from the Lord Wharton, with others in cipher addressed unto us with the same from the Earl of Cassillis; whereof one of them is a letter to the same Erle from the Erle Marshall, as your Majesty shall perceyve, which we have deciphered, and sende herewith unto your Majesty, both the cipher, and the same deciphered accordingly. And when it may appear unto your highness by the said Earle of Cassillis’ lettres, amongst other things, that he intendeth to procure one to be sent to me, Sir Rafe Sadleyr, as sone as is possible, for him to speke with th’ Erle of Anguisse and George Douglas, for such purposes as your highness has appoynted with the saide Earl of Cassillis. I, the said Sir Rafe Sadleyr, shall not faile, as soon as I shall heare of the comyng of such a one as they will sende, to repayre to Alnewyke, there to commune with him according to such instructions as I lately received from the lords of his majesty’s council in that behalf, and touching such matter as the said Erle of Cassillis now hath written of to your Highness, wherein he seemeth desirous to know your Majesty’s pleasure by me, I shall be ready to say and do as it shall please your Highness to command me in that part or anie other, according to my most bounden dutie.” The rest of this letter is unimportant. From the above extract it is, however, evident that the king had communicated certain purposes to Cassillis; that Cassillis, having first consulted with the Earl of Angus and Sir George Douglas, was to send a secret messenger to Alwick, to commune with Sir Ralph Sadler touching such purposes; that Sir Ralph had already received from the Privy-council instructions regarding this intended communication; that Cassillis had, moreover, written to the king upon another private matter, in which he wished to know the royal pleasure through Sir Ralph, and that this statesman only waited to hear his majesty’s opinion, that he might communicate it to the Scottish earl. The importance

of this minute analysis will immediately appear.

It is unfortunate that the letter in cipher from the Earl of Cassillis to the king, mentioned in the above despatch, is not to be found in the State-paper Office; but, on the 21st of May 1545, there is a letter from the Council of the North to the king, informing his majesty that the Scottish barons, Angus, Cassillis, Glencairn, Marshal, and Sir George Douglas, had declined, as they at first intended, sending an agent to Alnwick to confer with Sir Ralph Sadler; and thought it better that a confidential messenger should be sent into Scotland to deliberate with them. This letter from the Council of the North to the king is autograph of Sir Ralph Sadler. It contains this passage:—“And whereas I, the said Sir Rafe, was advertised from the lords of your majestie’s council that your highness’ pleasure was, I should repayre to Alnwick, to meet there with a gentleman that should be sent from the Erles of Anguisse, Cassillis, Glencairn, Marshall, and George Douglas and others, for such purposes as I was also then advertised from my said lords of his majestie’s council, for the whiche journey I have been in a readiness, according to your most gracious pleasure; it shall now appear to your highness, by the said Erle of Cassillis’ lettres, that they have chaunged that purpose, and would have me send a gentleman to them with such instructions, and in such sorte, as your majestie shall perceive by the said Erle of Cassillis’ lettres.” This letter from the Earl of Cassillis to Sir Ralph Sadler, alluded to above as having been transmitted to the king, is not to be found in the State-paper Office, but its purport clearly appears from a letter of the English Privy-council, dated May 30, 1545. The importance of this document induces me to give an extract. It shews, I think, that although they contain no direct mention of it, the former letters, of the 18th and 21st of May, related to the designs against Beaton’s life, and it reveals for the first time a plot that has remained hidden for nearly three centuries. The despatch is in the handwriting of Mr Secretary Paget, except the last sentence, which is the autograph of Wriothesley, then chancellor. It is addressed to the Earl of Hertford. “After our most harty commendations unto your good lordship, it may like the same to understand that the king’s ma-

jesty, having of late seen certain lettres sent from th’ Erle of Cassillis unto Mr Saddleyr, *the same containing an offer for the kylling of the cardinal if his majesty wold have it done, and wold promise, when it were done, a reward;* the other excusing the change of their purpose for sending of one from them to meet with Mr Saddleyr upon the Borders, and requiring John Forster (who, they say, being prisonir, may come well without suspition) should be sent to commune with them, and to as well signify unto them the king’s majestie’s pleasure towards them, as to hear again what they would do for their parts: To the first point his majestie hath willed us to signify unto your lordship, that his highness, reputing the fact not mete to be set forward expressly by his majesty, will not seem to have to do in it; and yet, not misliking the offer, thinketh good that Mr Saddleyr, to whom that letter was addressed, should write to th’ Erle of the receipt of his letter, conteyning such an offer, which he thinketh not convenient to be communicated to the king’s majestie; marry, to write to him what he thinketh of the matter, he shall say, that if he were in th’ Erle of Cassillis’ place, and were as able to do his majesty good service there as he knoweth him to be, and thinketh a right good will in him to do it, he would surely do what he could for th’ execution of it, believing verily to do thereby not only an acceptable service to the king’s majesty, but also a special benefit to the realme of Scotland, and would trust verily the king’s majesty would consider his service in the same; as you doubt not of accustomed goodness to them which serve him, but he would do the same to him.”¹ The remaining portion of this letter, which is an original, and signed by seven privy-councillors, relates to the sending Forster into Scotland, and to other matters not important to be noticed.

To go on unravelling these dark designs, it next appears, by a letter from the Council of the North to the king, dated June 3, 1545, that Forster had been sent for, to be despatched forthwith into Scotland, and, upon his arrival, Sadler informs his majesty, “that he will write to the Earl of Cassillis, according to the directions contained in the last letter from the Privy-council.”

¹ Original, State-paper Office, never before published.

Hitherto the conspiracy of the Earl of Cassillis for the assassination of Beaton does not seem to be connected in any way with the former plot of Brunston, Wishart, Kirkaldy of Grange, and Norman Lesley; but the above letter contains a sentence from which a strong presumption arises that the conspiracy of Cassillis was merely a revival of that of Brunston. "Also, here arrived presentlie a lettre in cipher from the Laird of Brunstone, which we have caused to be deciphered herewith to your majesty." Here the despatch of the Privy-council which was sent concludes with the usual prayer for the royal health; but in the scroll of that despatch, which is autograph of Sir Ralph Sadler, after the words "your majestie," the following sentence succeeds:—"And this day Sir Thomas Holcroft shewed us a cipher, which was devised betwix him and the said Brunston, when Brunston departed last from the court, upon the perusing of which cipher we fynd it to be the very same that is betwix your majesty and th' Erle of Cassillis, as your majestie shall perceive upon the sight of it, which we send here inclosed, so that it appeareth to us that both the Erle of Cassillis and Brunston"—here this additional sentence, which is scored through, breaks off abruptly; but it is evident, I think, the Privy-council intended to observe that it appeared to them that Brunston and Cassillis were in close communication with each other upon the point touching the murder of the cardinal, and, when we weigh all the circumstances, it is difficult to resist the same conclusion. Brunston formerly had submitted to Henry a plot for the assassination of Beaton; Brunston was an intimate friend and supporter of the party with whom Cassillis acted; Brunston had lately been at court, and had arranged a cipher for a secret correspondence with Sir Thomas Holcroft: at the moment when Cassillis again proposes to Henry the assassination of the prelate, a letter in cipher is sent from Brunston to the Council of the North, and instantly transmitted to the king; and lastly, Brunston and Cassillis are found using the same cipher. Every circumstance shews a unity of schemes, and an intimacy of communication, from which we may infer, I think, that the second conspiracy of Cassillis was merely a revival or continuation of the first by Brunston. The king, however, as we have seen, did not choose to give direct

encouragement to the proposal of Cassillis. That noble person was informed by Sadler that he had *not* communicated his design to the monarch, (which was untrue;) and Cassillis, although willing to commit murder upon a written order from the king, did not choose to peril himself in any such business upon the bare recommendation of Sir Ralph Sadler. He did not even venture to reply to Sadler's letter upon this delicate point; and, in the succeeding interview which took place between him and Forster, the English agent, at Douglas, in June, he appears carefully to have avoided any allusion to the subject. The proposal of Sir George Douglas to this envoy, that Henry, "if he would have the cardinal dead, should promise a good reward for the doing thereof," has been noticed in the body of this history, but Forster (July 4, 1545) returned without having had any communication with Cassillis upon the subject.

The Laird of Brunston, however, was resolved that the proposal for removing their great enemy should not so easily drop; and on the 12th of July we find, by the following extract from a letter of the Council of the North to the Privy-council, that this busy intriguer had renewed to the king and to his council the atrocious proposal:—"After our most hartie commendations, yesterday arrived here lettres in cypher to the king's majesty from the Larde of Brunston, and also to me, Sir Rafe Sadleyr, which we have deciphered and sende herewith, both the cipher and the same deciphered, unto you, which we praye you to declare and shewe unto the king's majestie. And forasmuch as the said Brunston doth partly in his said letters [touch] the matter which concerneth the kylling of the cardinal, because, as we perceyve by such letters, as I, th' Erll of Hertford, have received from the Lordes, you, and others of the counsall, his majestie will not seeme to have to do in that matter, but referreth the same to the handeling of me, Sir Rafe Sadleyr: I, therefore, have taken occasion upon the said Brunston's letters to write my mind to him in that matter, in such sorte as you shall perceyve by the copie of my lettre to the said Brunston, which you shall receyve here-with."¹

¹ Original, State-paper Office, never before published. Since this note was written the

Sadler goes on to state that he had written before this upon the same matter of the killing of the cardinal to the Earl of Cassillis, but since then had received no answer. The rest of his letter is of little interest; but the enclosure, entitled the "Copie of Sir Rafe Sadleyr's Lettres to the Larde of Brunston," which is wholly in Sir Ralph's own hand, is too important and curious to be omitted. It commences thus:—
 "After my right hartie commendacions, I have received your lettres by Robert Lyster, this bearar, with also your lettres addressed to the king's majestie, which shall be depesched hens to his highness with such sped as appertayneth. In one parte of your said lettres, I note chieflie, that certayn gentlemen, being your frends, have offred for a small sounme of money, to take hym oute of the waye, that hath been the hole impediment and lett to all good purposes there, so that they might be sure to have the king's majestie their good lorde; and that his majestie woolde rewarde them for the same. Of this I judge that you mean the cardinall, whome I knowe to be so much blynded to his own affection to France, that, to please the same he seeth not, but utterlie contempnyth all thinges tending to the weale and benefite of his owne countrey; and, indeede, hitherto, he hath been the onelie cause and worker of all your myschief, and will, if he continewe, be undoubtedlie the utter ruyne and confusion of the same. Wherfore I am of your opinion, and as you write, thinke it to be acceptible service to God to take him oute of the waye, whiche, in suche sorte dothe not onelie as much as in him is to obscure the glorie of God, but also to confound the commonweale of his owne countrey. And albeit, the king's majestie, whose gracious nature and goodnes I knowe, wool not I am sure, have to do ne meddle with this matier touching your said cardynall, for soundrie considerations; yet, if you could so worke the matier with these gentlemen your frends, which have made that offer, that it maye take effect, you shall undoubtedly doo therein good service, both to God and his majestie, and a singular benefit to your countrey. Wherfore, lyke as if I were in your place, it shulde be the first thing I

letter has been printed in the Collection of State Papers published by Government, vol. v. part iv. p. 470.

woolde earnestlie attempt, thinking therby for the respect aforesaide chieflie to please God, and to do good to my countrey." Sadler goes on to state that, if Brunston and his friends put the matter in execution, he knows so well the king's goodness and liberality, that they may assure themselves of a reward; and he adds this remarkable sentence, "And if the execution of this matier doo rest onelie uppon the rewarde of the king's majestie to such as shall be the executors of the same, I pray you advertyse me what rewarde they do requyre, and if it be not unreasonable, because I have been in your countrey, for the Christen zeal that I have to the commonweale of the same, I will undertake it shall be payed immediatlie upon the act executed, though I doo myselfe beare the charge of the same, whiche I woolde think well imployed. . . . Thus I write to you mine owne phantasie and mynde in this matier, as one that woolde be glad to give you such advise, as wherby you shulde doo that service to God, the kinge's majestie, and your owne natyve countrey, as might also be to your owne profett, and good fame."¹

The Laird of Brunston, however, and the friends with whom he acted, although willing for a small reward to slay the cardinal, proved as cautious and crafty as the Earl of Cassillis, and did not choose to undertake the murder without a direct communication with the king's majesty; they had determined to have the royal warrant and writ for their reward and their security; and on hearing that Sadler had not imparted their offer to the king, but only encouraged them out of his Christian zeal, and of his own phantasy, they for the present dropt their atrocious project. This letter of Sadler's was dated 4th of July 1545; and for nearly three months we can trace nothing of the plot against the cardinal. How the interval was occupied is shewn in this history. The invasion of Hertford, and the many miserable scenes which it brought in its train, gave ample employment to all parties in Scotland. Beaton, however, was still able to thwart the schemes of Henry, and that monarch evinced the continuance of his mortal enmity against the prelate, by recommending the Earl

¹ Original, State-paper Office, never before published. Since printed in the State Papers published by Government, vol. v. part iv. p. 470

of Hertford to advise the French deserters to shew their desire to be of service, by trapping or killing the cardinal, Lorges, or the governor. This was on the 9th of September 1545, and on the 6th of October, about a month after, we find pretty strong evidence that the plot for the assassination of Beaton had been resumed by Brunston. At this time, the following letter in cipher was sent by that busy intriguer to Henry the Eighth :—

" My deuty usit to your most excellent majeste; it will plesz our highnes, yat at yis last convention the Earl of Lennox is forfaltit, his brother the bischoip, and the Larde of Tulibarn, continewit to the nixt meeting betuyx yis and Chrismes. As to other gret actis ya haif none. Yai haif providit one thowsand horsmen to ly on the Bordouris, five hundredreth of the Mers, and other five hundredreth of Tevidail, such as hes no other thing to leif by.

" Morovir, yt wil lyk zour majeste, yat I am swirly advertezed by one yat knowith yt, wiche ys one suir frend of myn, yat the cardinal passis to France with the French king's leutenant, who, as I beleif, taryis for nothing but for his shippis, the which are sent for alrdy. The said cardinal entendis (yf his devising tak effect) to bring us gret support in the foir yere; but I hoip to God his jorney shall be shortit to his displeseur. He ys laborand to haif the yong queen to renpane in his castel of Sanctandros, and causis the governor to beleif yat yt is for his effect to keip hir to his sone; and the queen-mother makis hir angrye withal, but I beleif she dissembles. Thair is no other thingis for the present worthye your majeste's knowledge; and as otheris occurris, your majeste shal be advertest wyth such diligence as I may; alwayis assuring your highnes yat yair wes never mo gentil men desyrous to serve your majeste to the avauncing of your majestes godlye entent, nor yair is now." This letter is dated "at Ormiston yis saxt day of October, be him yat is desirous to do your highnes service at the uttermost of his power—Brunstoun."

¹ Original, State-paper Office, not before published. The Earl of Hertford in his letter transmits the cipher as from the Laird of Ormiston. On deciphering, it appears to be from Brunston. This letter was deciphered by Mr Robert Lemon, of the State-paper Office—a gentleman to whose skill in the knowledge of ancient manuscripts I have been often indebted.

After this letter, dated the 6th of October, there is no further correspondence between Brunston and the English government till the 20th of the same month. We then, however, find the following letter, addressed by that person to the Earl of Hertford :—" This present shall be to let your lordship wit, that sins the writting of my last letres, I talked at length with Sir George Douglas, who hath shewed me aunswere to the last letre that I send to your L., 'that the hole lords hath agreed to the marriage of the young quene to the governor's sonne with their seales and hand writtiis,' and that he as yet hath stopped the Earl of Anguisse, with the rest of his friends, notwithstanding the diligent pursuit of the governor and his friends; which they seke both with great and fayer promises and other wayes, threteninges of the hole authoritee to cum in their contrary, which may not be resisted by them; nevertheless, I am suir that Sir George Douglas will staye th' Erle of Anguisse and all others his freindes, unto such time as he maye knowe the king's majestie's pleasur; and if the king's majestie will mak them such support that they may mak their party good in the contrary of the governour and authoritee, to the avauncing of the king's majestie's affayres, they will . . . themselves and their friendes, and weir all their lyves or everything promised to the king's majestie be not kept; and in lik manner I shall cause all the gentlemen that your L. knoweth, my friends, to be readye as it shall please the king's majesty to command them . . . to assist to such as ar moost to the avauncing of his majestie's affaires, as they have at all tymes been hitherto; but his majestie must be plain with them, both what his majestie would have them to do, and in like manner what they shall lippen² to of his majestie; which matier, with maney other matiers, I would gladly your L. knewe for the avauncing of his majestie's affayres which wer too long to writ. Wherefore I have written, as your L. may see, to the king's majestie, desyring to speke with one of his majestie's counsaill, but in special with yr L. for the declaring of such things as I think gretely to the avauncyng of his majestie's affaires, at the castle of Berwyk, wher, be suche daye as shall be appoynted me, God willing, I shall meet your L. in secret manner, geving me advertisement thre-

² Lippen to—trust to.

or four before the tyme of meeting, which I pray your L. *in the most secret manner, for it standeth me beth in life and heretage if it be knownen;* at the whiche meeting I shall bring Sir G. Douglas' mind, with the rest of my friends, remitting all other things unto the tyme I have knowledge from your lordshipp, which I would were the soonest it was possible, as your L. loveth the welfare of the king's maj. affayres. This twenty of Octr. at Calder.¹

The remainder of the letter is unimportant; but from its contents, and judging by the following extract from Brunston's letter to the king, we may presume that the business in which he and the gentlemen, his friends, offered their services to Henry was of the most treasonable description:—

" My duty used to your most princelie maj., it may pleis yr maj. that consydering the present estait of my cuntrey, and knowing the minds of one great part of the baronnis and noblemen thereof, the desyer to do your M. service in all that lyeth in my power, as I am moch bounden, and so moch the more that your majeste intendeth nothing but the wealth and benefit of my cuntrey, and that your majesty shall know I have not forgotten the gret liberalitee and gentlenes that both I and divers of the gentlemen, my friends, through me, hath found with yr M., (who shall all be any as I am one redy to serve yr M. at our powers,) moveth me for the declaracion of such things as I think gretly to th' avauncing of your majesties affayres, to be desyrous to speke with one of your majesties counsayl, and rather with Mr Sadleyn, nor with any other, becaus he is both neir to these parts, and best knoweth my cuntrey; who if it pleis your M. to sende to the castel of Berwyck, becaus it is unable to me to cum furth within the cuntrey unknowin, and at such day as shal be appoyneted me, I shall (God willing) not fayle to mete him at the said town or castle, which I would were as secret as were possible, for if it were to cum to knowledge, it is the losinge to me both of life and heritage; albeit I never knew one that lost for the servyng of yr majestie, which, as knoweth God, I am willing to do, being sur your majesty will both acknowledge me and others my friends, such as I have had

grit relief of in the servyng of your majestie with the nombre of yr majestie's servands and friends. All such things as I both knowe and may lerne with the myndys of such as I tak to be yr majestie's friends, I shall shew at length to Mr Sadleyn, at such tyme as it shall please yr maj. that I meet him. Ther is non other thing for the present worthy your majestie's knowledge. Pray the eternal God to have your M. in his most blessed keeping. At Calder, this twenty of Octr. by your majestie's assured humble servitor,

" BROWNSTON.

" Hast the aunswere of these agayn to Coldingham."²

These last letters from the Laird of Brunston to Hertford and the king must be considered in connexion with what has already been proved against him. We have found him offering, on 17th April 1544, through Wishart, and by the assistance of his friends, Kirkaldy of Grange and the Master of Rothes, to apprehend or slay the cardinal. We find him, on the 2d April 1545, connected in the most intimate manner with the Earl of Cassillis, at the moment this nobleman renewed in his own person the proposal for the assassination of the cardinal. We find him again, on the 12th July 1545, sending a letter in cipher to the king, in which he renewes the offer that certain gentlemen, his friends, were willing for a small sum of money to take the cardinal out of the way; and now, when in these letters we find him, on October 6, darkly alluding to his hopes that the cardinal's meditated journey to France will be cut short to his displeasure, and on the 26th of the same month arranging a secret interview with Sadler at Berwick, which, were it discovered, might affect his life, and, at the same moment, declaring that the gentlemen, his friends, were ready to obey his majesty's commands—but that the king must be plain with them, as to what he wishes them to do, and also how far they are to depend on his majesty's support—it is difficult, I think, to resist the conclusion that this last correspondence, as well as the former, regarded a fourth offer for the assassination of the prelate, and that the anxiety of Brunston and the gentlemen, his friends, to know Henry's wishes, and what support they were to expect from

¹ Original, State-paper Office, not before published.

² Original, State-paper Office, not before published.

him, arose out of the indirect and crafty manner in which this monarch, whilst he covertly encouraged the plot, insisted on making Sadler the ostensible agent in the nefarious transaction. At this critical moment, when Brunston, in his letter of the 20th of October, presses the king to be plain, the letters in the State-paper Office relative to the intrigues of this busy baron suddenly break off. Between the 20th and the 31st of October 1545 occur a few unimportant letters, and from that date to 27th March 1546, a period of nearly five months, there is a tantalising hiatus. If I may be allowed a conjecture, I would account for it in this way: Henry the Eighth was, as we see, very anxious not to appear directly in the matter, but the conspirators, Brunston's friends, would not act unless he dealt plainly with them; they would not take the indirect encouragement to commit the murder which Sadler gave as coming solely from himself—they wished to have the king's hand and writ to plead in their defence, and produce as their warrant for protection and remuneration, after the deed was perpetrated. I imagine the king was driven to give this, but the correspondence for this reason was destroyed—hence this hiatus at this most critical moment. There are no letters to be found from 27th March to 29th May which throw the slightest light upon the conspiracy against Beaton, and on the morning of that last-mentioned day the unfortunate man was murdered—the principal assassins being Kirkaldy of Grange and Norman Lesley, the Master of Rothes, the very men who two years before had offered, through the medium of Brunston, to apprehend or slay him as he passed through Fife. One thing to be regretted in the disappearance of all letters relative to the murder after the 20th of October is the want of evidence to shew any recent communication between Brunston and the assassins of the cardinal; but the inference, I think, is scarcely to be resisted that this daring and unscrupulous intriguer was as intimately implicated in the last as in the first conspiracy.

At the moment of their committing the murder, Grange, Lesley, and others of the principal conspirators were in the receipt of pensions from Henry the Eighth, and were described by that monarch as his friends and supporters;¹ and it is not unimportant to observe

¹ Chalmer's Life of Mar. vol. iii. p. 340.

that, soon after the assassination, the Laird of Brunston was indicted on a charge of treason, although the process against him was afterwards withdrawn.

I shall conclude these historical remarks with the following interesting extract from the letter of a Scottish spy of Lord Wharton's, named James Lindsay, sending to that nobleman the first intelligence of the murder. It is one of three letters, all on the same subject, sent by Lord Wharton to the Privy council of England:—

"Syr, to advertise zou, this satterday betwix v hours and vi in the mornynge the cardynal is slane in the castle of St Andrewes, be Normond Leslie, in yis maner: At the cumyng in of ye masonis and warkmen in ye place to the wark, Normond Leslie and thre wyth him enteret, and after hym James Melwin and thre men with him, and fenzit themselves to have spokin with the cardinal; and after yame came the zoungh laird of Grange, and viii men with hym all in geir, quihilk the porter stoppit to lat in quhill ane of them strak him with ane knyiff and kest him in the hous. Incontynent they shot furth all the warkmen and closet the zet, syne sought the chalmer and shot furth all ye howsald men as thai gat thame mastrit. Ye cardinale herand ye dyn in his chalmer come furth, was passand to the blockehous head to heir quhat it was; Normond Leslie and his cumpanye met him in the torn pyk [off] and slew him; and after ya have depossest the place of all therein till, excep ye governor's sone, his priest and servand, and ye cardinal's chalmer child, ye common bell of ye toun rang, ye provest and town gadert to ye noumer of thre or four hundredth men, and come to ye castell, quhill Normond Leslie and his cumpanye come to ye wall heid and sperit quhat they desyrit to se, ane deid man. Incontynent ya brot ye cardinal deid to the wall heid in ane payr of shetis, and hang hym our ye wall be the tane arm and the tane fute, so bad ye pepill se yer than God. This Johne of Douglas of Edinburt, Hew Douglas, Ayr, shaw me, and master Johne Douglas, quhilk was in Sanct Andrews and saw ye sam wyt yar eue."

"Wryten this Satterday at midnyt,
zour servand,

"JAMES LYNDSAY."²

² Original, State-paper Office, not before published.

LETTER C, page 41.

Additional Illustrations from the Hamilton Manuscripts.

Since this volume passed through the press, I have seen, by the politeness of Mr James Chalmers, a Catalogue of the Hamilton Papers which belonged to his late uncle, the learned and indefatigable author of "Caledonia." These papers are in the possession of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton. The catalogue is a voluminous one, and contains occasional extracts from the letters and documents which it describes. Of these, the most valuable relate to the regency of the Earl of Arran and the minority of Mary; and it was gratifying to find that they not only confirmed, but greatly strengthened the views which I have given of that important period. Thus, with regard to the scheme of Henry for the entire subjection of Scotland under his dominion, and the mercenary manner in which the Scottish prisoners entered into his views, we have ample information in the following description of the contents of volume iv. of the Hamilton Papers:—

Volume iv. commences with December 1542, and ends with January and February 1542-3. It contains, amongst other occurrences, Henry's instructions to Sir Richard Southwell for conferring with the Earls of Bothwell and Angus, and also with the Scots prisoners, in order to engage them in his designs of subduing Scotland to himself, by possessing him of the government for the present, assuring the succession to him in case of the young queen's death, and granting him the tutelage of her person in the meantime, with the capital fortresses, and places of strength which he sought to have delivered into his power, together with the cardinal and another—*i.e.*, the Lord Regent—whom he looked on as his most dangerous opponents. In a minute addressed to Lord Viscount Lisle, January 8, 1542-3, Henry writes, "We have already given you advertisement how we have dismissed from hence the noblemen and others of Scotland our prisoners, and what the same have promised unto us." In what manner these promises were made appears from this extract from the Catalogue. Henry's articles with the Earl of Angus, then an exile in England for promoting the enterprise—his *open* articles, as he calls them—subscribed by the Scottish prisoners and Earl Bothwell, and his

secret articles, subscribed by ten of these prisoners the fittest, as he thought, to be trusted—namely, the Earls of Cassillis and Glencairn; the Lords Maxwell, Fleming, Somerville, and Gray; and by Robert Erskine, Oliver Sinclair, the Laird of Kerse, and John Ross of Craigy. Again, in Henry's instructions to Sir Ralph Sadler, in vol. v. of the Hamilton Papers, the English monarch states that Sir George Douglas had undertaken, not only by promise, but by *oath and bond*, to perform greater services than any of the rest. The treasonable extent of the engagements of the Earl of Angus and Sir George Douglas to Henry appear from a minute of the king to the Duke of Suffolk, dated November 12, 1543, in which that nobleman is directed to expostulate with Sir George Douglas regarding a fresh demand for money from England. "They have not stiked," says the English monarch, "to take upon them to set the crown of Scotland upon our head. Where has now become all their force and courage? . . . what meant they to take upon so great maistry and to be able to perform in deed so little?" Under the date of December 1543, we find a minute of a letter from the Duke of Suffolk to Henry's pensioners in Scotland, with an account of the sums of money which had been distributed to them, viz.:—

	STERLING.
To the Earl of Angus, . . .	200 £
" of Glencairn, . . .	200 marks
" of Cassillis, . . .	200 marks
To the Master of Maxwell, . . .	100 £
To the Sheriff of Ayr, . . .	100 £
To the Laird of Drumlanryk, 100 £	
To the Earl of Marshall, John Charters, the Lord Gray's friends in the North,	300 marks
To Sir George Douglas and his friends in Lothian and Merse,	200 £

In the midst of so much venality and desertion on the part of the Scottish barons, it is pleasing to find an exception in the Earl of Argyle, who resisted more splendid offers than were made to any of the rest. This is shewn by a minute of the Privy-council of England to the Duke of Suffolk, preserved amongst the Hamilton Papers, by which it appears that the Laird of Drumlanrig, and the Sheriff of Ayr, (Campbell of Loudon,) had laboured to promote king Henry's designs, at some charge to them.

selves, and that, in satisfaction of that charge, they had received for the present five hundred crowns each, with the promise of a pension when the good fruits of their service should deserve it, particularly when they should accomplish the treaty which they had begun with the Earl of Argyle, *to make him a convert to Henry*. To induce his compliance, they were to make him a promise of one thousand crowns in hand, and a yearly pension of one thousand more; but if he would not comply, they were to "threaten him with the wild Irish, whom Henry was to hound, and to ruin both him and his country." It is shewn in this history that Argyle resisted the overtures of Henry, and that the wild Irish and men of the Isles were accordingly "hounded" upon him.

LETTER D, page 56.

Fiery Cross sent through Scotland.

"He sent the fiery cross throughout the country."—On this subject there is the following interesting entry in the MS. Books of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, under the date 28th August 1547:—

"Item—My Lord Governor's grace being surely advertised that the army of England was at hand; to Mungo Stratherne, messenger, letters of Proclamation, with the *Fire Cross*, to Kincardine, Aberdeen, Banff, Elgin, Forres, Cromarty, Nairn, Inverness, and Bills again, to the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and the Master of Forbes. iii. lb.

"Item—To Normand, purvant, same letters, with the *Fire Cross*, to Linlithgow, Stirling, Clackmannan, Kinross, Perth, and all other quarters."

LETTER E, page 64.

State of Scotland after the Battle of Pinkie.

"The land was shamefully deserted by the greater part of its nobility."

This is a severe charge; but the following letters, selected from many others which I have transcribed from the State-paper Office, will prove that it is not unmerited. The leading nobles in Scotland at this time were the Earls of Angus, Huntly, Argyle, and Sir George Douglas, brother to Angus. All of them deserted the governor, and entered into secret and treasonable transactions with England. I proceed to prove this by the evidence of original letters.

On the 10th of September the Battle of Pinkie was fought, and on the 18th of the same month the Protector Somerset commenced his retreat. On the 20th of October, Lord Grey of Wilton addressed a letter to the Protector,¹ in which he gives the substance of an interview which passed between him and Sir George Douglas. "He," [Douglas,] says Grey, "liked well all the Articles, [alluding to the Secret Articles of Agreement mentioned in the text, p. 65,] except that by which, in the event of the young queen's marriage to any other than Edward the Sixth, they bind themselves to serve the king's majesty against their own country." "He began," [I use the words of Grey's letter]—"he began to allege what it was to forsake his native country and living there; he shewed me also that he had yearly of the queen a stipend of one thousand crowns, and of the French king as much; and now, since his being with me, the governor sent for him to speak to him, and offered him an abbey of another thousand crowns by year: but he came not at him, nor will not do; but if I would mitigate that article, he was contented with the rest. I shewed him that if he refused part he must refuse the whole.

And then at the last he granted thereunto, and hath both made his othe upon the testament to observe them, and subscribed the same for a witness thereof in sort as all others have done." Douglas entreated Grey to induce the Lord Protector to erase this article, which Grey assured him he was not likely to do. He then communicated his "device," which, with certain requests on his own behalf, Grey enclosed to Somerset. Douglas declared that he intended to go with them (the English army) himself, and be their guide; but enjoined secrecy of this private transaction, as, if it transpired, he should not be able to win his friends. I subjoin a brief abstract of the paper given in by Douglas, entitled, "The order of an Invasion into Scotland, devised by Sir George Douglas, to be attempted within a month after the date hereof, or six weeks at the furthest." He states that the number ought to be six thousand men—two thousand five hundred to be horse—and victuals in carriages sufficient for four days, for the whole. They should direct their march,—

First, To Jedburgh — to meet the

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Lord Grey to the Protector, 20th October 1547.

Lairds of Fernyhirst and Cessford, and the rest of the gentlemen of Teviotdale, who must be sent for: no manner of spoil or hurt to be done.

Second, Journey to Selkirk—where they will meet Buccleuch and the rest of the gentlemen.

Third, To Peebles—to meet Lord Hay of Yester. (Sister's son to Douglas.)

Fourth, To Lanark—where the governor is sheriff. Here he would that the Earls of Angus, Cassillis, Glencairn, and the Lord Boyd should come in.

Fifth, To Glasgow; and *Sixth*, To Stirling.¹

This crafty baron next handed in a paper, which he probably considered not the least important part of the transaction. It is entitled,

THE REQUESTS OF GEORGE DOUGLAS

For his own part: and consists of four stipulations. 1st, To have one thousand pounds sterling, within eleven days, to support himself, friends, and strengths, against the authority, and to have a yearly stipend of five hundred pounds sterling. 2d, His friends not to be opprest. 3d, That he may have his goods, silver, money, plate, and apparel, that he left in his hostess' house in Berwick, delivered to him. 4th, To have from the English king the keeping of the fort at Eyemouth. — The Lord Grey, addressing Somerset, adds this emphatic sentence:—"Your Grace, I doubt not, considereth that this *man would not be won without money*, and albeit he demandeth a *thousand pounds* in hand, I doubt not but he will be satisfied with *a thousand marks*." These extracts sufficiently prove the venality and desertion of his country by Sir George Douglas. The following letter from Angus, his brother, to Sir Andrew Dudley, the English governor of the fort

¹ From a curious paper, published for the first time by Mr Stevenson, in his "Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary," p. 99, (from the Harleian MS. 289, fol. 73,) we learn that this intended invasion was stopt by the advice of Thomas Bishop, an adherent of Lennox, who, on good grounds, suspected that Douglas was acting treacherously.

"My device to him," [the Protector,] says Bishop, "and the Duke of Northumberland, at Shene, stopt my Lord Grey from entering Scotland with six thousand men, whereof the greatest force horsemen, being then the flower of England—his journey being devised by George Douglas, to have brought them to the butchery, as well was known after. The article [communication] to him in that matter at good length will declare."

of Broughty, (see text, p. 63,) establishes the same fact against that nobleman:—

THE EARL OF ANGUS TO SIR ANDREW DUDLEY.

"Trusty cousin and hearty friend. After most hearty commendations, may it please you I have received your writing the 16th day of December, at Douglas, and understand the same, thanking you greatly of your kind offers. And as anent my assurance, in this manner I have assured my kind friends and servants, because my bands is sae meikle, whose names could not be specified . . .

. . . . praying you heartily, as my special trust is in you, to be good and friendful to my servants and friends, as Patie Lynn, James Anderson, and my servants of Arbroath, which no more I cannot specify unto you shortly. And as for my servants and friends, I shall use them as ye do. And as anent the siege of the King's Craig-house of Broughty, I was warned to the same by the queen's grace and the governor. I had business I shewed them, that I might not come. They sent special of the council to me, and offered me great rewards to come to the same. *I cause all my friends and servants to stop and remain.* . . . He could not make any more on this side the Firth, but sixty of honest men. And as long as he was at the siege, I had posts running daily forth of my lands of Hermitage, to see how you fared in all causes, and have my answers, the which I shall shew you at our meeting. And as anent the coming in the country, I should have been with you ere now, were not the coming of the Earl of Lennox in Scotland . . And I have appointed friends to convene the 18th day of this instant month, towards that matter, to set him forward in his affairs, the which shall be shortly, will God. And I [mean to] advertise my

Lord of Lennox, with two of my honest friends, Glencairn, Cassillis, or Lord Boyd, or Creichton, of all purposes three days afore. This is the principal stop that holds me from you longer. Thereafter I shall be at you with diligence. Anything that you would advertise me of shortly, send it to Arbroath, and they will haste it to me. Thus, fare ye well, most heartily. At Douglas, the 18th of December.

"Your cousin,
"LORD EARL OF ANGUISH,"²

² MS. Letters State-paper Office, December 18. 1547.

I have mentioned two other powerful noblemen as deserting the governor and embracing the English interest — the Earls of Huntly and Argyle. Huntly was a Roman Catholic; his possessions and power in the north were almost kingly; he had been taken prisoner at Pinkie, and was anxious to be permitted to return to Scotland on his parole. Argyle, on the other hand, was the great rival of Huntly in the north; he had escaped at Pinkie; he was a supporter of the Reformation, and one of the most able and ambitious men in Scotland. The Protector Somerset played the one against the other! Argyle, on the 25th December 1547, had come to St Johnston with an army of Highlandmen, thinking to annoy Dudley, the English governor of Broughty, and ravage the country, which had taken assurance of the English. Some time after this, he threatened to join the French in besieging Broughty,¹ and continued these hostile denunciations till the 5th of February 1547-8, when Sir Andrew Dudley addressed a letter to the protector, in which he informed him that, at the suit of Lord Gray, (of Scotland,) and other gentlemen of Angus, he had granted Argyle an assurance for twenty days for the whole country of Angus. There then follows this sentence:—“There were two assurances made between the Earl of Argyle and me, [Dudley:] the one *open* to the bishops and council, the other *secret* between Argyle, Gray, and me, to be a favourer of the king’s godly purpose, and to take the king’s majesty’s part in the same; on which communing, the Lord Gray borrowed one thousand crowns of me to give the Earl of Argyle, to make him the more earnest in the same, as appeareth by a bill. sent your grace . . . it shall please your grace . . . to send some man shortly, with a commission and authority to commune with the Earl of Argyle. The Lord Gray putteth no doubt but that, for a pension and a certain sum of money, your grace shall win him to the king’s majesty’s godly purpose, and to be an earnest settler forth of the same.”²

On the 7th February 1547-8, Lord Gray (of Scotland) addressed a letter to the protector, in which he informed him that he had borrowed five hundred ryals, (one thousand crowns,) and had given them to Argyle, “for the good

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Dudley to the Protector, 22d January 1547-8.

² Ibid., 5th February 1547-8.

causes he had done to his grace’s affairs.” He adds, that a commissioner must be sent from England to treat with Argyle, who is “wonderfully given to favour the king’s [Edward’s] godly purpose.”³

The commissioner sent to treat with Argyle was John Brende, muster-master of Berwick. On the 6th March 1547-8, Dudley informed the protector that the Scottish earl had come to Coupar, and that Lord Gray (of Scotland) had ridden with Mr Brende that morning to communicate with him there.⁴ The result of this communication appears from a letter of Brende to the protector.⁵ It states that, on the 6th of that month, he, with Lord Gray, met Argyle near St Johnston’s. Brende thanked him for the good disposition which he had shewn to the purpose of the marriage. Argyle regretted the damage done by the war, and professed his willingness to work some mean for the redress thereof. Brende then wished to draw him on to make some proposal or some promise. This he warily declined, requesting him to shew what the protector required. Brende then proceeds thus:—“And when I was about to declare, he bad stay: ‘I am held,’ quoth he, ‘in a marvellous jealousy; and there be,’ he said, ‘certain of the council mortal enemies to your part. I would, therefore,’ quoth he, ‘to colour the matter, ye should devise to speak somewhat openly to me, before them, of such matter as ye think good, which shall be a mean that, without suspicion, ye may treat *secretly* with me of such things as be of moment.’ Then called he before him the Abbot of Coupar, the Lord called Stuard, Sir John Cammel, and divers others. ‘This gentleman,’ quoth he, ‘hath commission to me; and, because it partly toucheth you, ye shall hear what he will say.’” Brende then proceeded to declare the purpose of the marriage, the opposition of evil men, and the cause of the war. “And thereupon,” says he, “I plucked forth, and presented to the earl a parcel of my instructions, which I had drawn forth for that purpose, (nothing mentioning the Earl [Argyle] nor any proffer made unto him,) but only purporting a present contract of marriage, &c., the delivering

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Gray to the Protector, 7th February 1547-8.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Dudley to the Protector, 6th March 1547-8.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 9th March 1547-8.

the castles of Edinburgh and Dunbar as pledges for the queen's entry into England, and the conditions of peace. When this was done, the earl somewhat spoke, 'how greatly fair means might prevail in this matter, and how much violence made against the purpose,' which words confirmed with a churme [murmur] of those that stood about; somewhat I did speak again to the purpose when violence should be used, and in what cases it was lawful for princes to use the sword. Then did he draw me aside, and allowed my device. 'Hereupon,' quoth he, 'we shall colour our treaty, and blind these wolves' eyes,' and willed me to proceed in my secret commission."

Brende then thanked him for his good disposition, and told him they knew he had the power, wherefore if good will were joined in him with power, there would be no further doubt of success. He (Brende) shewed the great advantages which would ensue, besides the honour to himself, "and so declared his reward for bringing it to pass,"—that is, for accomplishing the first point of his instructions, viz., the delivery of the queen. "'If all things,' said he, [Argyle,] 'had chanced well, she had been in my hands ere this; for if after the battle [Pinkie] pursuit had been made, she had come into my country—and she wrote to me for the same purpose at the last entry of the Lord Grey. But now,' quoth he, 'she is in Dumbarton.' 'And you may easily come by her,' quoth I, 'or else devise how she may be had.' 'No,' said he, 'it is impossible; the castle is stark, [strong,] and if force could prevail, it were unfitting for me to enforce my natural lady.' . . . After great persuasion, he agreed with me upon that point, like as it may appear unto your grace by the paper of articles subscribed with his hand, and sealed with his seal, sent herewith unto your grace. And because his resolution therein was not to the full effect of my instructions, I took advantage of his promise therein, and passed to the

"2nd point, which he liked well, (except the authority of the priests, not provided for in the articles,) saying, 'he would pass to the court, and persuade the governor and the queen immediately to send ambassadors for the accomplishment of it.' 'And if,' quoth I, 'they will not agree to your request, what will ye do then?' 'What would you I should do?' quoth he. Then I plucked

forth a paper of the third degree, as I had them all four severally written, touching the *taking of open part* with the king's majesty, and shewed it him. He required to have it, that he might read it, and examine it with himself.

"When he had put the same in his bosom, we fell in the rehearsal of divers things; and, knowing of a certain envy between the Earl of Huntly and him, I took occasion to talk of the said earl. When he heard him named he started, and beating his fist upon the board, said, 'If ye let him home, ye mar all.' Whereupon I took occasion. 'My lord,' quoth I, 'therefore it behoveth you to take this matter on hand; for if you will not, he may perchance be so persuaded that he himself will enterprise this thing,' which words — moved him marvellous much, and he said, 'Marry! I will do it indeed.' —Then proceeded I, 'If the governor will still see the ruin of the country, and still stand on the contrary part, what shall become of him?' 'No governor,' quoth he. 'Who, then,' quoth I, 'is so meet as your lordship?' 'I think,' quoth he, 'I have most friends and power.' 'If, then,' quoth I, 'we have the favour and power of England joined thereunto, who shall withstand you?' 'It is true,' quoth he. Finally, he condescended to the third article, in this effect:—That if the queen and the governor would not agree to these covenants, then would he straightway repair to Argyle, there call all his friends about him, declare to them his mind, and require them to take his part in this purpose, and then to send one unto your grace, to conclude upon certain points of his proceeding before he do further. . . I perceive he would covenant to have aid against his enemies in the north by sea, and require that the Earl of Lennox should have no power on his lands in the west parts. When I saw he had thus condescended, I did not touch the fourth degree, otherwise than that he should lett [hinder] the conveyance away of the queen."

Brende then promised him an assurance for his country for fifteen days. At first Argyle would not subscribe, or set his seal to the agreements which Brende had drawn. The English envoy then broke off; but late in the night, when all were in bed, he sent Lord Gray to urge Argyle. "and finally, after four or five times going and coming betwixt us in the dead time of night, he at

last was brought to such case, that in the morning he signed." Argyle's character, as given by Brende, is this:—"I have heard him reported to be much constant. I found him humane, wise, and grave, in whom I could have believed all things that he said, if I had not determined in them to trust nothing at all. I judge him greedy of gear, desirous of authority, . . . and therefore moved unto this by the envy he beareth to the governor, and the emulation he hath with the Earl of Huntly, which will be ever of the contrary part to him; therefore, the matter, in my opinion, consisteth in this point,—whether your grace's purpose may take better effect in letting the Earl of Huntly home, so as to raise factions betwixt them, or else by detaining him, to have the Earl of Argyle wholly in that part, if so be he will stand unto his promise." The letter which contains the above interesting details is dated Warkworth, 9th March 1547-8, and signed JOHN BRENDE.

Notwithstanding the promise to Argyle, the protector entered into a secret agreement with the Earl of Huntly, who engaged, if allowed to return home, to embrace the English faction, and further the king's (Edward VI.) majesty's affairs. This appears from the following letter of Huntly to the protector, dated Newcastle, 20th March 1547-8:¹—

THE EARL OF HUNTRY TO THE
PROTECTOR.

"MY LORD,—After most humble commendations of service unto your grace, it pleases you to wit: We arrived at Newcastle, 18th, and has heard no word of Scotland yet, except a man of mine who came with my Lord Gray, lieutenant, and met me by the way. My said Lord Gray has informed you how all passes in Scotland, better nor I can presently. My lord, I am credibly advertised that our governor repents that our mistress is past to Dunbarton, and is labouring to bring her grace again to . . . [Stirling] which is promised to him, how soon her grace bees whole in person. She has been very sick in the small-pox, and not yet whole. My Lord Governor, as I am advertised, will be brought I lyppenyt [trust] to get hasty word by his grace of the same; and, if commissioners shall come to the Borders for end of all these affairs, may it please

your grace to shew my Lord Gray whc shall meet with them, and of your grace's mind in that behalf. Your grace shall be sure of such service as I may do, to the furthering of the king's majesty's affairs, in all sorts as your grace will command, as my duty is shall shortly know indeed, and shall . . . to him, as I can get intelligence, not doubting . . . the best part, and favour the peace better nor . . . and your grace's purpose; which I pray God send to the weal and union of both the realms that have so long been at discord. And further, your grace may command me, and, in what place I may do best service, shall be aye ready at your grace's charge. My lord, I am not able to give your good grace most humble thanks for the great goodness and humanity shewn to me, who have ever yet deserved the contrar; albeit, gif it be in me possible, I shall make such amends as my wit or power may serve. My lord, I pray the living God have ever your grace in his tuition—at the New Castle, the 20th day of March.

"Your grace's humble
servant at power."

The signature of this letter, some words of which are illegible, is gone, but there is a contemporary docquet on the back, "xx March. Th' Erle of Huntly to my L P."

It is stated at p. 65, that in the enterprise or invasion of the Lord Wharton, on 18th February 1547-8, the Earl of Lennox commanded the Scottish Borderers in the service of Edward VI. The result of this disastrous expedition is given in the text; but the following letter of Lennox, addressed to the Protector Somerset after his return, will convince the reader of the calm treachery with which this Scottish nobleman could talk of the *king's majesty's* (Edward VI.) possessions in the west parts of Scotland.

EARL OF LENNOX TO THE LORD
PROTECTOR.²

"Pleased your most noble grace to be advertised that, whereupon my suit, it pleased your grace to be so much my good lord, to grant my entry into Scotland, for the service of the king's majesty, with such Scottish men as be lately come to his highness's devotion, for the which I most humbly thank your grace, according to the same; and

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office.
² State-paper Office, original, 26th December 1547, Castle of Wrissel.

at command of your grace's several letters to my Lord Wharton for that purpose, I entered, and by his lordship's advice, proceeded, as your grace hath been here before advertised. And of intent your grace should know more at large the order thereof, and also my repair again to Carlisle at your grace's pleasure, for the full accomplishment of such service as, for divers occasions, at this time could not have been done, my friend Thomas Bishop, the king's majesty's servant, is instructed to declare the same at length, to whom it will please your grace give firm credence. And by him would be most glad to know your grace's further pleasure and commandments, which I shall obediently, God willing, to the uttermost of my poor power accomplish.

"It will also please your grace to be advertised that there is a little abbacy, called Holywood, of a hundred pounds a year, now vacant, and within the precincts of the king's majesty's possessions of the west parts of Scotland, which the governor has given to the Sheriff of Ayr, as will appear by a letter, with other writs, sent to me of late forth of Scotland, which I send unto your grace herewith. I would most humbly beseech your grace, at my poor suit, to grant your grace's gift of the same to my cousin, the Laird of Closeburn, who serves the king's majesty very well, and is a man of power, for whose constancy and honesty in his highness's service, I will be bounden, and to my friend Thomas Bishop, whom with him he would were And, God willing, with your grace's aid and favour, the same shall be defended contrar' the Sheriff of Ayr, or any others, enemies to the king's majesty in that realm. And thus prays Almighty God to preserve your grace in most long and prosperous life, with much increase of honour. At the king's majesty's castle of Wrissel, 16th Dec. 1547.

"Your grace's most humbly,
with his service,
"MATTHEW LENNOX."

LETTER F, page 67.

Arrival of the French.

As some obscurity hangs over the arrival of the French auxiliaries in Scotland, it will be useful to fix precisely the dates, which are not very clearly given either by Keith or by Robertson. The following abstract of a letter from Sir

R. Bulmer to the protector marks the arrival of the first band of French, chiefly officers, to have been on the 25th December 1547:—

SIR RALPH BULMER TO THE PROTECTOR.

He sends his grace these news, which had been brought by the Lord of Cessford. "Christmas day last past, two French ships came to Dunbarton, there landed with fifty French captains, bringing money to wage ten thousand Scots for a year, which money is sent by the Bishop of Rome. There came three of the chief captains to Stirling, to the queen and the lords, on St Stephen's day at night, apparellled all in white satin, and told the queen and the council the cause of their coming. They shewed her there was six thousand Frenchmen on the sea for Scotland, waiting a wind. As soon as the ten thousand Scots are mustered, and these six thousand are landed, then a post is to be sent to the French king, who had an army in readiness to land in England, and a fleet of ships is also promised by Denmark, but this not so certain." The letter concludes by advising his grace to grant power to the Lord of Cessford to collect the rents of Mernis, for two reasons—"1st, It will be most for the king's benefit; 2d, It will set Buccleuch and Cessford at variance, which were a good policy; for although Buccleuch had taken assurance, yet he was playing a double part, assuring the queen and governor that he is yet a true Scotsman."

We learn by a letter from Lord Wharton to Somerset,² that Monsieur de la Chapelle was the leader of these Frenchmen, which proves the accuracy of De Thou, book v. c. 15, vol. i. p. 189. Buckley edit.

By another letter from Lord Grey to the protector, dated at Berwick, June 17, 1548,³ it appears that the second arrival of auxiliaries, conducted by Monsieur D'Essé, must have been June 15th or 16th, 1548. This was the great force, including Suisses and Almains, as well as French. Lord Grey diminishes their number to twelve hundred men-at-arms and eight hundred light horsemen; but they were at the least six thousand strong, as is proved by a letter, State-paper Office, Lord Wharton to the Protector, dated 14th July 1548.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 30th December 1547. Sir R. Bulmer to the protector.

² MS. State-paper Office, B. C., 1st January 1547-8.

³ MS. State-paper Office.

LETTER G, page 68.

Embarkation of the young Queen for France.

Neither Keith, p. 55, nor Chalmers, p. 10, are able to fix the exact time of the young queen's sailing for France. A letter in the State-paper Office, from Lord Grey to the protector, which is dated August 4, 1548, mentions that he is informed the young queen is not yet transported, but lieth in a galley, accompanied with other galleys and four or five ships, a little from Dunbarton, where, he adds, she undoubtedly was *yesterday*, at twelve of the clock at noon. And he continues, "the Lady Fleming, her mistress, making request to the captain of the galley, whose name is Villegaigno, to have her on land to repose her, because she hath been long on the sea; he answered, she should not come on land, but rather go into France, or else drown by the way." Grey advises the protector to fit out some ships that way, with the hope of meeting her.

In the Egerton Collection of MSS. No. 2, preserved in the British Museum, the contents of which are inaccessible to the public from the want of catalogues, there is a volume of transcripts, from original letters during the reign of Henry the Second of France. My attention was directed to it by my learned friend Mr Holmes of the British Museum, who pointed out the following passages. In the first of them Henry the Second, writing to Monsieur de Humyeres, the governor of his children, who were then brought up at the Palace of St Germain-en-Laye, informs him (on the 27th July 1548) that the little queen of Scotland may soon be expected there, to be educated with the dauphin and his other children.

"Mais pour cela je ne veulx que vous bougez avec mes enfans, attendu maintenant que ma fille la petite Royne d'Escosse y pourra lors ou plutot ar-river pour y estre nourrie avec euxl."¹

In another letter from the king to Monsieur de Humyeres, he sends the dauphin and the young Queen of Scots a dancing master, Paul de Rege, to whom he gives a high character. The letter is dated 10th January 1549.

"Mon Cousin. Pour ce que Paule de Rege present porteur est fort bien balladin, et à ce que j'en y peu coagnoistre

¹ 27th July 1548.

honnête et bien conditionnée, j'ay advisé de le donner à mons filz le Dauphin pour luy monstre à baller, et pareillment à ma fille la Royne d'Escosse et aux jeunes gentilhommes et damoiselles estant à leur service, et de mes autres enfans; 'à ceste cause vous le presenterez à mon filz, et le ferez loger et manger avec ses autres officiers.'

LETTER H, page 69.

Ferocity of the War.

"The war assumed a character of more than common ferocity."—In addition to what is mentioned in the text, this fact is strikingly illustrated by a paper² entitled, "Memorial (it should rather be scroll of a memorial) for Edward Atkinson, alias Bluemantle, sent by the protector to the Governor of Scotland. This document states that, after having obtained audience, the said Bluemantle, putting on his coat of arms, and making reverence unto him, (the governor,) without any other salutation, shall boldly say as ensueth. The substance is that, understanding that sundry the king's majesty *his grace's sovereign lord's subjects and servants, born within the realm of Scotland*, have now a good while, and yet do, according to their bounden duty, serve his majesty in these wars—the governor had published a proclamation, commanding that if any Scotsmen so serving shall be taken in the field bearing arms against him, they shall not be used as prisoners, but immediately put to death as rebels. Bluemantle is enjoined to demand this proclamation to be immediately recalled, otherwise "all Scottish prisoners, of whatever rank they be, shall be put to death as soon as they are taken." This paper is followed by a "Minute of a Proclamation for not taking of Scottishmen," dated 22d May 1549. It commences thus:—"Edward by the Grace of God, &c. . . Whereas the Earl of Arran, pretending himself to be Governor of Scotland," and goes on to speak of the people of Scotland not acknowledging, or giving obedience to "their superior and sovereign lord the king's majesty of England, in consequence of which the countries are at war, and Scotland grievously afflicted with slaughter and devastation, as with a just plague of God." It then proceeds thus—"Not content with all this, the governor hath devised a most cruel, unnatural, and

² MS. State-paper Office, 19th May 1549.

deadly proclamation, that every Scotsman serving the king of England should be slain as soon as taken, by means of which some of his majesty's subjects, Scotsmen born, have been put to open and cruel death;" therefore, it continues, "that cruelty may be punished and repelled with cruelty," he, the protector, "straitly commands all his highness's wardens, deputy-wardens, officers, &c., that they do not from henceforth take any Scotsmen serving against his highness in the field, but do kill the same out of hand without ransoming them, until the Governor Arran have revoked his proclamation, under penalty of death, if this is disobeyed."

LETTER I, page 70.

Arrival of the Queen-dowager in France.

The exact date of this princess's arrival in France has not been given by any of our historians.

In an original letter of Anne de Montmorency, constable of France, to Mr de Bassefontaine, ambassador to the Queen of Hungary, (for the knowledge of which I am indebted to Mr Holmes of the British Museum,) there is the following notice of the arrival of the queen-dowager in France. The letter is in the British Museum. Additional MSS. 10,012, and is dated 27th September 1550:—

"Je vous advise que la Royne d'Escosse est puis trois ou quatre jours arrivée au Havre de Grace en bonne santé et tresbonne compagnie; elle fit hier son entrée à Rouen. En dimanche prochain viendra trouver le Roy à l'Abbaye de bonnes nouvelles, où il va demain coucher pour faire sa Feste St Michael; apres que les seigneurs, l'aura venu et parlé à elle, on vous fera entendre (ce que) sera requis sur les propos qui ont este entamez touchant la fait d'Escosse."

LETTER K, page 71.

Sir John Mason's Correspondence.

Some interesting particulars, illustrating the intrigues of the queen-dowager in France, a subject hitherto slightly passed over by our historians, may be derived from a volume in the State-paper Office, containing the correspondence of Sir John Mason, the English ambassador at the court of France. Its authenticity is unquestionable, as it is Sir John's own Letter-book.

We learn, by a letter from Mason to

the Privy-council, dated Rouen, 6th October, [Correspondence, p. 118,] that he had that day visited the Queen-dowager of Scotland, who arrived there on the 25th of September, accompanied by a numerous train of Scottish gentlemen, and was received with much honour.

On the 19th of the same month and year, (1550,) Mason addressed a letter to the Privy-council, dated Dieppe. He observes that, since their coming, the principal of the Scots had visited him, except the Earl of Huntly and George Douglas. "They lamented their estate, and shewed why we [the English] had not our desire, [the king's marriage to Queen Mary,] which was 'the rude handling of them at all times, and especially in the notable slaughter made upon them at the great battle, [Pinkie.]'" He then continues, "I gave ear unto them as unto Scots, and framed mine answers accordingly, and told them that they had refused that, that I did not doubt but, within a short time, they would wish they had taken—we sought their own honour, profit, and commodity, which, forasmuch as they would not embrace, they were like to drink such as themselves had brewed, who had lively played the part of the horse that Aesop, in his fables, telleth sought the help of man against the hart. The Earl of Glencairn much complaineth of the detaining of his two sons, his father being dead, for whom they were pledges, but specially of the ill-handling of them by the archbishop, who, he saith, kept them two years in his kichen."

I shall subjoin a few brief abstracts of some important letters addressed by the same ambassador to the Privy-council. They throw considerable light on the relative politics of France, England, and Scotland at this period.

In a letter, dated Blois, 4th December 1550, he remarks, that "the Scots bear a fell rout in this court, and be much made of, of all estates." He proceeds to say that, "whatever differences of opinion they might have on other points, on one they all agreed—viz., that the English shall not have one foot of ground in Scotland peaceably, more than we had before the wars, but they will have the thanks for it all together, if we like, and not forego it by piecemeal. Ireland," he adds, "is ready to revolt and deliver themselves to a new master on a moment's warning."¹

¹ Mason to the Privy-council, 4th December 1550. Blois.

In a subsequent letter, dated Blois, 7th February 1550-1, he states that the blind Scot, named the Bishop of Armagh, who had lately been in Ireland with commission to make a stir among the people, passed five or six days ago by this court, and had been much made of,—adding, he was departed to Rome.

Again, on the 23d February 1550-1, writing to the council, he informs them that there were rumours of war secretly intended by France against England. England had refused a passport to the Master of Maxwell, at which the French king was much incensed, exclaiming, “*Vrahment, voyez ci une pauvre vengeance.*” “There is in these men no love.” “The Queen of Scots and her house beareth in this court the whole swing. . . . The queen-dowager desireth the subversion of England, ‘whose service in Scotland is so highly taken here, as she is in this court made a goddess.’ These men, the French, are in great readiness for the wars.”

In a letter of the Lords of the Privy-council to Mason, dated at Greenwich, the 28th of January 1550, it appears that a spy had been sent, whom Ballnaves the Scot recommended as proper to be trusted, and who would take care to bring the English ambassador as much intelligence as the Scots have.¹ In Sir John Mason's answer to the Privy-council, dated Blois, 26th February 1550-1, he informs them that this bearer arrived on the 24th February, but dared not tarry, as he found himself likely to be waylaid. He, however, had one who would fill his place—viz., the Lord Grange. “I talked with him,” says Mason, “of the queen's departing, and of the men-of-war she was said to have with her.” He said, “this would not take any effect this year. He [Grange] promised to communicate everything he could learn to the English ambassador, who, when he speaks of him, is to call him Corax.”² By a letter of Mason to the Privy-council, 23d March 1551, dated at Blois, it appears that the Vidame of Chartres was at that time in Edinburgh, on a mission from France. In another letter of the 18th April 1551, from the same to the same, it is stated that one George Paris had arrived from

Ireland. “He brags much,” says Mason, “associates with the Scots, and has offers from the Irish to league with France and throw off England. He hopes to have the dauphin shortly proclaimed King of Scotland and Ireland. It is said they are to have no open assistance from France, but that the Queen of Scotland laboureth to have them holpen underhand by means of the Earl of Argyle and James Kennalt, [Macconnell.]” He goes on to observe that “John a Barton had arrived from Scotland at the French court, and brought word that the governor [Arran] had a great party in his favour to keep him in his place till they should have a king. This,” he adds, “was ill taken by the queen-dowager, who was determined either to have the government herself, or to set a Frenchman of her house in it. Corax [Grange] thinks if the meeting of the commissioners for the Borders goes on smoothly, all things will be quiet for this year.”

The Earl of Huntly had obtained one part of his suit from the Queen of Scots, which was that, when she came of age, he should have the earldom of Moray. “This king [the King of France] hath bound himself by writing thereunto, but the custody of the bond is to be in the hands of the dowager. All the Scots are against him in this, especially Sutherland and Cassillis. It will breed a great stab amongst them.”—“The queen is all for herself, and for a few other friends, whose partiality, shewed more to some than others, maketh a great heartburning. Lord Maxwell, at his departing, had a chain of five hundred crowns; Drumlanrick had nothing, and used rude speech to the queen.

“The Scottish queen's shipping is hasted very much. It is thought she shall embark a month sooner than she intended. The Lady Fleming departed hence, with child by this king.³ And it is thought that immediately upon the arrival of the dowager in Scotland, she will come again to fetch another. If she so do, here is like to be a combat, being the heartburning already very great; the old worn pelf⁴ fearing

¹ This was, I suspect, the Dowager Lady Fleming, a daughter of James IV. by the Countess of Bothwell.—Douglas' Peerage, p. 698.

² The “old pelf” was the king's mistress, Diana of Poictiers, a woman at this time of fifty-three years.—Mezeray, p. 623.

¹ Mason, p. 250. Lords of Privy-council to Mason, Greenwich, 28th January 1550, *Ibid.*, p. 251.

² Sir J. M. to Privy-council, Blois, 26th February 1550-1.

thereby to lose some part of her credit, who presently reigneth alone and governeth without empeasche."

We learn something of the French intrigues in Ireland by a letter of Mason to the Privy-council, dated at Amboise, 22d April 1551.

He states, "that a gentleman who had come from Ireland with George Paris was named Cormac Ochonor, eldest of nine brothers who are alive. He braggeth his father hath been the great worker of all this rebellion. He never would submit to England, although he hath a house within a stone's cast of the English pale. Last Saturday, he exhibited to the constable a paper, shewing what force, both horse and foot, his father could bring into the field; asked for prompt assistance, as it was by the French intrigues this rebellion had wholly been stirred up. He begged for five thousand men at the French king's charges. He was paid with fair words. *The Dowager of Scotland would fain have them holpen*, and I am assuredly informed the Vidame is nothing behind them, who, since his coming hither, hath been very highly and friendly entertained by the king. He hath had many secret conferences with the king, the dowager, and the constable." The Vidame had come from a mission into Scotland. By another letter, dated 27th April 1551, it appears "that the Scottish queen's departure . . . was again delayed, and some thought the occasion thereof was some fancy the French king hath to some of her train."¹

In his next letter, 29th April 1551, at Amboise, Sir John Mason informed the English Privy-council that he had made diligent search as to the news brought by a post from Scotland. "I have learned," says he, "that there is come to light a practice (or at the least a great suspicion thereof) for the poisoning of the young queen. He that took the matter upon him is an archer of the guard, who is escaped into Ireland. There is as much diligence made as can be devised for the getting of him from thence; and, as they say here, he is already stayed to be sent back again to Scotland, and so into France. The old queen is fallen suddenly sick upon the opening of this news unto her. By whose means this thing should principally be moved I cannot yet understand, but it is thought that it was devised by

some discontented Scots. This is told me for a great secrecy; whether it be true or not your Lordships may know farther with time. . . The said post hath brought word that the Lady Fleming is brought to bed of a man child, whereat our women do not much rejoice."

On the 10th May 1551, Sir John Mason, writing from court to the English Privy-council, observes, "There hath been lately a great consultation touching the marriage of the dauphin to the Scottish queen, which the constable and the chancellor would in any case to be deferred." "The Dowager of Scotland maketh all at this court weary, from the high to the low—such an importunate beggar is she for herself. The king would fain be rid of her, and she, as she pretendeth, would fain be gone. Marry, the hucking is about many matters, the king being desirous she should depart upon promise of the sending thereof to her, and she desiring to have the same with her. The sums are two hundred thousand francs of old debts, which is in a manner all paid; and, besides that, fifty thousand francs more, partly for the payment of other pensions accorded among the Scots, and partly to remain at her disposition as she shall see cause, and fifty thousand for her own pension for that year. Talking yesterday with the Receiver-general of Bretagne of Scottish matters, he told me—wishing that Scotland were in a fish-pool—that, out of his receipt and of the receipt of Guienne, there had been sent thither since the beginning of the wars nineteen hundred thousand francs—how much had passed otherwise he knew not," (p. 312.) On the 19th May, Mason alludes to the French intrigues in Ireland. . . "I saw," says he, "yesterday a letter sent from Rome to an Italian in this court, wherein was written that the Bishop of Armachan, as he calleth himself, which is the blind Scot that lately passed this way, is thoroughly and very well despatched touching the matters of Ireland." It appears, by a subsequent letter of June 11, that the "blind Scot," the Bishop of Armagh, had departed with his despatch towards Ireland. The last letter in this valuable volume of Sir John Mason's Correspondence is dated July 20, 1551.

Sir William Pickering, and soon after him Sir Nicholas Wotten, succeeded

¹ Mason to the Privy-council, 27th April 1551. Amboise.

² Mason to the Privy-council, p. 309, May 10, 1551.—From court.

Mason as ambassadors at the French court, and their letters, which are preserved in the French Correspondence of the State-paper Office, vol. vi., contain many interesting illustrations, not only of the politics of France and England, but of the condition of Scotland and of Ireland during the last years of Edward and the commencement of the reign of Mary. Indeed, I might rather say, they illustrate the history of Europe; for it was the business of the English ambassador at the court of France to have his agents or spies in Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands, and to transmit to the sovereign, the prime minister, and the Privy-council of England, reports of all the information which he received.

Mary of Guise's interview with Edward the Sixth took place on the 4th of November 1551, and she appears to have returned to Scotland about the 24th of the same month, as, in the books of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, under the date 21st November 1551, we find an order directed to Sir Andrew Ker of Littledean, directing him to send letters of proclamation to Jedburgh, Selkirk, Dunse, &c., charging the lords, lairds, and other gentlemen to meet the queen at our Lady Kirk of Steil, in their most honest manner, on the 24th November.

In a letter dated September 19, 1552, preserved in the French Correspondence, we find a paper, entitled "Secret Information of Thomas Stukely," which details "a plan of the French king for the conquest of England."—First, he would order that the Scots should enter into Northumberland with all their power; then, he himself would come to Falmouth, and the Duke of Guise with another army to land at Dartmouth. He would proclaim and restore the old mass, putting the people to their full liberty as he doth in Scotland.

In a letter from Sir N. Wotten to the Privy-council, dated at Melun, 28th December 1553, he informs them that the report of the Queen of England's marriage with the Prince of Spain made the French begin to speak of war with England; and he adds, that the French king had already despatched Monsieur D'Osell with the same commission that he had on his former mission, and that he meant to send after him the Vidame of Chartres, with a certain number of soldiers.

We find by a letter of Wotten's to the council, Melun, January 9, 1553-4, that

the Queen of Scots now kept her table and lodging apart, to shew that she had come to her years to have the whole rule in her own hands.

I shall conclude these short notices of the valuable matter which may be found in the French Correspondence of the State-paper Office, by the following letter of Wotten to the Lord Paget, privy-seal, and Sir William Petre, knight, principal secretary. It is dated 1st March 1556-7, and is written wholly in cipher, but fortunately the contemporary decipher accompanies it:—

"My duty remembered to your honours. I have heretofore certified the queen's majesty, what good will this bearer, Kirkaudrie, [Kirkaldy,] seemed to bear to her majesty, and to the realm of England, and how little he is contented with the present state of Scotland, and how desirous he is to see it delivered from the yoke of the Frenchmen, and restored to their former liberty; and also what offers he hath divers times made to serve the queen's majesty the best he could. Whereupon, although I have had no answer, yet forasmuch as he returneth now into Scotland, and thereby hath occasion to pass through England, I advised him to do that thing which I perceivéd he was before of himself minded to do,—that is to say, to visit you by the way, thereby you may, by communication with him, the better understand his mind; . . . and, in case you like him, appoint him how he is to serve. Marry, this he earnestly requireth, that in case the queen's highness shall think him meet to do her majesty's service, that yet, nevertheless, his matters may pass only through your hands, for he feareth greatly that, all the council being privy to it, it were not easy to be kept secret, whereby he should stand in danger of his life.

"Now, in case you should ask me what I think of him, first I must say, that I have had no acquaintance with him, but sith my coming hither. Marry, by the communication I have had with him now and then here, either he must be a very great and crafty dissembler, or else he beareth no good will at all to the Frenchmen, and, next unto his own country, he beareth a good mind to England.

"Marry, what service he shall be able to do now, he intending to continue in Scotland, your wisdoms can better consider than I. For because I trust he

will declare at length unto you of the return of his father and of Balnaves into Scotland, and for what purpose it is thought they are revoked; and also, that Melvin, who accused the Bishop of Durham, is come hither, recommended to the French king by the Dowager of Scotland's letters; and of the arrival of the four Scottish bands of horsemen, and of a plott [plan] of Berwick, which the French king hath, howsoever he came by it; and how these men are nothing sorry for the Earl of Douglas's death; and of a Scottish physician married in London, named Durham, as I remember, who is a spy for the French king and the Dowager of Scotland, and hath a pension of her, three hundred crowns by the year, therefor; and how ill the Bishop of St Andrews can away with the Frenchmen in Scotland; and also, of the arrival of one of the Landgrave of Hesse's sons into the court here, and how he is made of, and how sorry they were here for Marquis Albert's death; and generally of such news as are spoken of here in the court: I shall, therefore, the less need to unite them at this time, but making here an end, &c. &c.

"Paris, 1st March 1556-7."

In the following passage, which occurs in a letter of Wotten to the queen, I find the first notice of the afterwards active and intriguing Randolph.

"Postcripta. I have received," says he, "a letter from a scholar of Paris, named Thomas Randall, who writeth thus—'Thomas Stafford took his ship on Easter-day, at night. There are gone with him more French than of our nation. He went in the Flower de Luce, whereof is captain John Rybande, and another ship with him laden with artillery.' Thus far writeth the said Randall. . . . The voice is at Dieppe that they go into Scotland, which I believe not well."

We see here how soon Randolph began to shew his talents as a diplomatic spy.

LETTER L, page 73.

Cardan and the Bishop of St Andrews.

This celebrated and eccentric physician, who was brought to Scotland to

cure the Scottish primate, gives us a few particulars of his journey in his amusing work, "De Vita Propria." Unfortunately he is very brief, and more communicative on the extent of his fees than the state of the country. He calls the primate Amulthon, (Hamilton,) and declares that, after his case (a kind of periodic asthma) had defied the skill of the physicians of the emperor and the French king, he made the bishop smack whole in twenty-four hours. "Intra xxiv. horas nullo vel plane levi remedio liberabatur." He came to Edinburgh on the 3d of June, and remained till the 13th of September. He returned to Italy January 1523.

His mode of cure, as described by Randolph in the following extract from one of his letters to Cecil,¹ was not quite so simple as Cardan himself would have us believe. He sinks the "young whelps, and hanging the poor prelate by the heels."

"I will be bold," says Randolph, "to trouble your honour a little with a merry tale:—Cardanus, the Italian, took upon him the cure of the Bishop of St Andrews, in a disease that, to all other men, was judged desperate and incurable. He practised upon him divers foreign inventions. He hung him certain hours in the day by the heels, to cause him to avoid at the mouth that the other ways nature could not expel; he fed him many days with young whelps; he used him sometimes with extreme heats, and as many days with extreme colds. Before his departure, he roundeth, for the space of six days, every day, certain unknown words in his ears, and never used other medicine after. It is said that at that time he did put a devil within him, for that since that he hath been ever the better, and that this devil was given him on credit but for nine years, so that now the time is near expired that either he must go to hell with his devil or fall again into his old mischief, to poison the whole country with his false practices."

¹ MS. State-paper Office, 15th Jan. 1561-2.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM

MANUSCRIPTS, CHIEFLY IN HER MAJESTY'S STATE-PAPER
OFFICE, HITHERTO UNPRINTED.

No. I., page 78.

Power and Licence of the Nobles in Scotland.

In England, during the reigns of Henry the Eighth, Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth, the power of the sovereign over the nobles, and the influence of the wishes of the crown, was infinitely greater than in Scotland, during the same period. In Scotland, the nobles lived in what Sir Ralph Sadler denominates, in his despatches, "a beastly liberty." They reasoned and acted for themselves; they looked to the course which they thought promised best for the country, or for their own interest; and the idea of following this in opposition to the commands of the crown was familiar to them; nay, not only this, but they often contemplated the idea of compelling the sovereign to follow their wishes. The different feelings of the nobles in the two countries are strongly marked in the following letter of Mr Thomas Martyn to Mary Queen of England, dated at Carlisle, 11th June 1557.¹

After alluding to their conferences on the Borders, he goes on to state a conversation between the Earls of Westmoreland and Cassillis, in these terms:—"My Lord of W. sayeth to th' Erle of Cassillis in this wise—'My Lord, I think it but folly for us to treat now together, we having broken with France, and ye being French for your lives.'—'Nay, by the messe,' quoth the Earl of Cassillis, 'I am no more French than you are a Spaniard.' 'Marry,' quoth my Lord of Westmoreland, 'aslong as God shall preserve my master and mistress together, I am, and shall be a Spaniard, to the utmost of my power.'—'By God,' quoth the Earl of Cassillis, 'so shall not I be French: and I told ye once in my Lord your father's house, in King Henry the

Eighth his time, that we would die, every mother's son of us, rather than be subjects until England: even the like will ye find us to keep with France; and I may tell you there are seven hundred Gascons arrived at Dumbryton, more than we will be known to you of, which were sent to serve in the Borders here; but we would not let them pass the river, and they, being allowed but three pence a-day, have so scattered abroad, that three hundred of them be licked up by the way: sic [such] is the favour that our men beareth unto the Frenchmen here. My Lord of Durham telleth me that the Bishop of Orkney ministered talk unto him to this effect, wishing in any wise restitution to be made of both parties equally, whereby the amity might be preserved betwixt us, notwithstanding the French. Mr Makgill told Mr Henmar there was no cause why they should break with us, though we broke with France, for the emperor's wars with the French impeacheth not our legal amity with the emperor. Likewise Mr Carnegy gave me his faith as a Christian man, and honour of a Scottish knight, that his mistress meant the like: marry, for saving his oath, he added at the end, as far as we yet ken.'

No. II., page 78.

Coalition between the Lord James and the Queen-dowager.

Some new particulars regarding this coalition, mentioned in the text, may be gathered from a letter of Lord Wharton to the Lords of the Council.² It gives an account of a secret meeting which he had with William Kirkaldy of Grange.

"He (says Lord Wharton, alluding to Kirkaldy) saith, that the Prior of St Andrews, who is accounted the wisest of the late king's base sons, and one of the council of Scotland, the Earl of

¹ MS. State-paper Office.² MS. State-paper Office, 14th Nov. 1557.

Glencairn, and the Bishop of Caithness, did agree to write the letters in the pacquet; and that the dowager is of council, and consenting therewith; and that she wrote her letters to Mr D'Osell, to cause Kirkaldy make devise to send the letters to me, that they might pass in haste; and that the dowager's letter did meet D'Osell beside Dunbar, towards Edinburgh, the 13th of this month. D'Osell returned [sent back] Kirkaldy, upon the sight of the dowager's letter, with the pacquet forthwith, who saith to me, it is the queen and D'Osell's device, and D'Osell very earnest therewith, with many words that he hath given to Kirkaldy of the great displeasure that the queen and D'Osell beareth, especially against the Duke Chastelherault and the Earl of Huntly, and against others whom D'Osell nameth the feeble and false noblemen of Scotland. Amongst others, he said, when their army retired, and their ordnance was to be carried on the water, D'Osell sent word to the Duke that he would see the ordnance returned over the water again, and that it might be put in safety. The messengers said to the Duke that D'Osell was angry with their retire, and breach of their promise, and also not regarding the safety of their ordnance. The Duke's answer was, 'Let Monsieur D'Osell gang by his mind an he will; for as we, the noblemen of Scotland, have determined and written to the queen, so will we do, and let him look to his own charge:' and so was D'Osell left. Upon which words, and their manner of dealing, D'Osell will seek their displeasure by all the ways and means he can, and so will the dowager do also, as Kirkaldy saith.

"In talk with him, I said it was a great matter to enterprise to bring into that realm my Lady Margaret Lennox, and my Lord her husband—that it required power of noblemen, with others, and houses of strength. He said, the coming of my lady to the dowager, with their friends there, would order that matter, and said, they might first have the castle of Tantallon, which is in the keeping of the Laird of Craigmillar, and at the dowager's order. He speaketh liberally that they would have many friends, and also have on their side the authority that now is. This matter, as I think in my poor opinion, may be wrought for my Lady Margaret and my Lord of Lennox, and to continue the

displeasure now standing amongst the greatest of that realm."

Kirkaldy goes on to propose a truce, as introductory to a peace. Wharton answered, the Scots only pretended an anxiety for a truce when it suited themselves, and broke it when they pleased; but, should it be entertained, whom would he propose to send? Kirkaldy said, the Lord Seton, Captain Sarlabarrosse, who had been one before, the Laird of Craigmillar, and the young Laird of Lethington, or two of them. These are the dowager's, and great with her. He said, Scotland would agree to an abstinence for twenty days or for two months, but they must have a licence for an especial man to pass through England, and communicate with the French king. Wharton asked the news. He said, on Sunday last, 7th November, arrived a ship at Leith, with letters and money from the French king. He had seen a letter from the French king to D'Osell, in which it was said he should have all his desires of men and money. That four ensigns, twelve hundred foot, and two hundred horse, were despatched to come into Scotland by the West Seas, and daily looked for.

It is not unimportant to notice, (on account of the light it throws on the character of the Lord James, afterwards the Regent Moray,) that we here find him, Kirkaldy of Grange, Glencairn, and the Bishop of Caithness, acting with the queen-dowager against Huntly, Chastelherault, and Argyle. We find them receiving money from the French king, and stipulating for the presence of a French army in Scotland. Kirkaldy has generally been represented as a mirror of chivalry,—consistency certainly was not his forte. In a letter of Wotton, (see *supra*, p. 386,) dated 1st March 1556-7, he is determined on putting down all French influence in Scotland; here we find him, nine months after, inviting a French army into that country, and subsequently, in 1559, he returned to his first opinion. (See this volume, p. 97.)

NO. III.

Letters and Papers of Knox.

Not a few original letters of Knox are preserved in the State-paper Office, besides various public papers in his handwriting, and evidently his composition. Of these, some appear in his *History*, but often very incorrectly printed, many

words being altered, and parts entirely omitted. Others are to be found in the MS. Calderwood, in the British Museum. The letter quoted p. 100, and addressed to Percy, dated 1st July 1559, which has not been printed, commences thus :—

" The mighty comfort of the Holy Ghost for salutation. Right honourable, having the opportunity of this bearer unsuspect, I thought good to require of you such friendship, as that, from time to time, conference and knowledge might be betwixt us ; I mean not myself and you, but betwixt the faithful of both these realms, to the end that inconveniences pretended against both, may, by God's grace and mighty power, be avoided. Your faithful friend, Mr Kirkaldy, hath reported to me your gentle behaviour and faithful fidelity in all things lawful, honest, and godly. Continue this, and God, by you, shall work more than now appeareth." Then follows the sentence quoted in this vol., p. 100, after which he concludes in these words : " But all this had I rather communicate face to face, than commit to paper and ink. This other letter I have direct to Mr Secretary, which, if your honour will cause to be delivered, I suppose you shall not offend him. Other things I have, which now I cannot write for continual trouble hanging on my wicked carcass, by reason of this tumult raised against Christ Jesus in His [infancy.] I pray you, seek to know the mind of the queen, and of the council, touching our support if we be pursued by an army of Frenchmen ; and let me be assured by advertisement reasonably. And thus, committing you to the protection of the Omnipotent, I most heartily desire you to approve my love—enterprise—and enterprise not altogether without deliberation, as the troubles of these times do suffer.

" Yours to command
in godliness,
" JOHN KNOX."

" From Edinburgh the
1st of July 1559."

Knox's letter to Cecil, dated 12th July 1559, is preserved in the State-paper Office, in the original. It enclosed his celebrated apology to Elizabeth, and has been printed incorrectly, and in a garbled state, in his History, p. 224. The postscript of the same letter, which has not been printed, is as follows :—

" After the scribbling of these former lines, came Mr Whitlaw, of whom, after conference, I understood the match in which I have laboured ever since the death of King Edward, now to be opened unto you : God grant you and others wisdom with humility. Immediately after Mr Whitlaw, came a servant from Sir Harry Percy to Mr Kirkaldy, who, departing from us at Edinburgh to speak the said Sir Harry, brought news, to the hearts of all joyful, whensoever they shall be divulgat. It was thought expedient to communicate the matter only with those that are strongest, till farther knowledge of the queen's majesty's good mind towards this action. We doubt not the good mind of the whole Congregation, which is great, as I doubt not but by others you will understand ; but it is not thought expedient that so weighty a matter be untimely disclosed. True and faithful preachers in the north parts cannot but greatly advance this cause. If a learned and godly man might be appointed to Berwick, with licence also to preach within Scotland, I doubt not but to obtain unto him the hands of the most part of the gentlemen of the east Borders. Advert one thing, sir, that if the hearts of the Borderers of both parts can be united together in God's fear, our victory shall be easy. The fear of no man, I trust, this day to cause any of those that have professed themselves enemies to superstition within Scotland, to lift their hand against England, so long as it will abide in the purity of Christ's doctrine. Continual labours oppressing me, (most unable for the same,) I am compelled to end with imperfection. The source of all wisdom rule your heart to the end.

" So much I reverence your judgment, that I will ye first see my letter, or ye deliver it, and therefore I send it open. Read and present it, if ye think meet."

At the same time that the Lords of the Congregation addressed to Cecil the letter mentioned in the text, p. 101, as written and composed by Knox, the same indefatigable man prepared for them a letter to the queen. It is dated Edinburgh, 19th July 1559 ; and as it has never been printed, I subjoin it here from the original, in the State-paper Office, and in Knox's handwriting, and signed by the principal leaders of the Congregation :—

LORDS OF THE CONGREGATION TO QUEEN ELIZABETH.

" Right mighty, right high, and right excellent princess, with our most humill commendations unto your majesty. Albeit that heretofore divers men have wished, and as occasion hath offered, prudent men have devised, a perpetual amity betwixt the inhabitants of these our two realms; and yet that no good success hath to this day ensued of such travel and labours taken, yet cannot we, the professors of Christ Jesus in this realm of Scotland, cease to be suitors unto your grace, and unto your grace's well-advised council, to have eye to this our present estate. We have enterprised to enter in battle against the devil, against idolatry, and against that sort of men, who, before abusing, as well us as our princes, made us enemies to our friends, and the maintainers of strangers, of whom we now look [for] nothing but utter subversion of our commonwealth. If in this battle we shall be overthrown, (as that we stand in great danger, as well by domesctical enemies, as by the great preparation which we hear to be sent against us by France,) we fear that our ruin shall be but an increase to a greater cruelty. And therefore we are compelled to seek remedy against such tyranny, by all such lawful means as God shall offer. And knowing your grace to have enterprised like reformation of religion, we could not cease to require and crave of your grace, of your council, subjects, and realm, such support, in this our present danger, as may to us be comfortable, and may declare your grace and council unfeignedly to thrust [thirst] the advancement of Christ Jesus, [and] of His glorious gospel: and whatsoever your grace and council can prudently devise, and reasonably require of us again for a perpetual amity to stand betwixt the two realms, shall, upon our parts, neither be denied, neither (God willing) in any point be violated, as at more length we have declared, in a letter written to your majesty's secretary, Mr Cecil.

" Right mighty, right high, and right excellent princess, we pray Almighty God to have your grace in His eternal tuition, and to grant you prosperous success in all your godly proceedings, to the glory of His name, and to the comfort of all those which earnestly thrust the increase of the kingdom of Christ Jesus.

" From Edinburgh the 19th of July,
" By your grace's most humble
and faithful friends,
" ARCHD. ERGILL.
" ALEXANDER GLENCAIRN.
" JAMES SANCTANDROS.
" PATRICK RUTHVEN.
" ROBERT BOYD.
" ANDRO OCHILTRE."

The proclamation, published by the Congregation on the 25th July 1559, alluded to in this volume, p. 103, is an important document, and has never been printed. It is as follows:—

" Apud Edinburgh, 25th July,
Anno 1559.

" Forasmuch as the Lords of Congregation and Secret Council that has remained in this town (this sum time) bygane, are now to depart forth of the same, upon compromitt made betwixt them and the lords sent from the queen's grace regent, containing these heads: That no idolatry shall be erected where it is already suppressed. And that no member of the Congregation shall be troubled for religion, or any other cause dependent thereupon, in body, lands, or goods; and that their minister shall have full liberty, not only to preach, but also to ministrate the sacraments, publicly and privately as they think good, without trouble or impediment to be made to them by the queen, or any other, openly or quietly. And also that no band or bands of men of war, French, Scots, or others, shall be laid, nor remain within the town of Edinburgh. Therefore, the said Lords of Congregation has thought good to notify the said, by this present proclamation, to all whom effeirs, and especially to their brethren of the Congregation now within this town; certifand them, and promising faithfully, if any of the foresaid points be violated or broken, that the said Lords of the Congregation will in that case fortify, concur, and assist, with their whole power and substance, as they have done in times bygane, to the reformation thereof, supporting of their brethren, relieving of every member of the true Congregation that shall be open to be invaded or molested, and to the furthering of God's glory, upon their honours, and as they will answer therefor in presence of Eternal God.

" Proclaimed by voice of trumpet at the market cross of Edinburgh, the day aforesaid."¹

¹ This Paper, which is in the State-paper Office, is endorsed in Cecil's hand, 25th July,

Not only did the Lords of the Congregation, as stated in this volume, p. 106, address their remonstrances to Cecil, but Knox directed to the same minister a vigorous letter, dated at St Andrews, 15th August 1559. It is garbled and changed in his History, but the passages I have given in this volume, p. 108-9, are taken from the original in the State-paper Office. On the 23d of August 1559, he addressed the following letter to Sir James Crofts, under the fictitious name of John Sinclair. It is preserved in the State-paper Office, and endorsed, in Cecil's handwriting, "Mr Knox :—"—

"Immediately upon the receipt of your letters, right worshipful, I despatched one to the Lords, from whom I doubt not ye shall receive answer according to your desire, with convenient expedition. The queen-regent here, as before I have written unto you, is marvellous busy in assembling all that she can. She hath addressed ordnance, and other munition, to Stirling. She hath corrupted, as is suspected, the Lord Erskine, captain of the castle of Edinburgh, and hopeth to receive it; but that will not so much hurt us as our enemies suppose, if all other things be prudently foreseen. She [breatheth] nothing but treason and revolt from her daughter's authority; but men begin to foresee somewhat more than they did not long ago. I wrote unto you before in favours of my [wife,] beseeching you yet eftstones to grant her free and ready passage; for my wicked carcass, now presently labouring in the fevers, needeth her service. I beseech you to grant unto the other man that cometh for my wife, passport to repair towards her for her better conducting. The spirit of all wisdom rule your heart, in the true fear of God to the end. From Londye, in Fife, the 23d of August 1559.

"Yours to power,

"JOHN SINCLEAR.

"In the midst of the exess.

(exies.)¹

"Read, write, and interpret
all to the best."

No. IV., page 105.

Sir Ralph Sadler's Instructions.

These Instructions mentioned in this apud Edinburgh. Proclamation of the Congregation.

¹ The exies--the ague; Jamieson's Supplement.

volume, are preserved in the State-paper Office, and are endorsed in Cecil's hand, "8th August 1559. Sir Ralff Saddler." They are important in the strong light they throw upon Elizabeth's policy towards Scotland; and, as they have not been printed, I subjoin them here:—

"MEMORIAL OF THINGS TO BE IMPARTED TO THE QUEEN'S MAJESTY — THE MATTER OF MR SADLER'S.

"First.—That he understand how the proceedings there differ from our intelligences here; and thereafter to proceed either the quicklier or the slower.

"Item.—The principal scope shall be to nourish the faction betwixt the Scots and the French, so that the French may be better occupied with them, and less busy with England. The means whereby may be those as follow, beside such as Mr Sadler of himself shall think meet. First, to provoke all such as have stirred in the last assembly, to require the queen-regent to perform her promise, both for restoring of religion, and sending away the Frenchmen, and to persuade them that, although they may be reconciled with promises or rewards, yet shall they never be trusted by the Frenchmen.

"Item.—To procure that the Duke may, for preservation of the expectant interest which he hath to the crown, if God call the young queen before she have issue, instantly withstand the governance of that realm by any other than by the blood of Scotland: like as the King of Spain, being husband to the Queen of England, committed no charge of any manner of office, spiritual or temporal, to any stranger, neither doth he otherwise, nor his father before him, in his countries of Flanders, Brabant, or any other, but sufferereth them to be governed wholly by their own nation. In this point, if the Duke mean to preserve his title, ought he to be earnest; for otherwise he may be assured that the French, under pretence of subduing of religion, will also subdue the realm, and extirpe his house.

"Item.—If this may be compassed, then may the nobility of Scotland also require of their queen, that, to avoid such mortal wars and bloodshed as hath been betwixt England and Scotland, there might be a perpetual peace made betwixt both these realms, so as no invasions should be made by either of them by their frontiers, and for the answer of an objection which may be made

to disturb this purpose, it may be well said, that although the Scottish queen do falsely pretend title to the crown of England, yet doth she it but as descended from the blood of England—that is to say, of the body of King Henry the Seventh, whereunto none of Scotland either doth or can make pretence, and therefore none ought to be abused by any of such persuasion.

“Item.—The Duke may pretend as good cause to arrest Monsieur D’Oysell, or some other of the French, as for answering for his two sons, the earl and the L. David, as the French have done, in driving away the one and imprisoning the other, being neither of them his subjects nor offenders against him.

“Item.—It shall do well to explore the very truth whether the Lord James do mean any enterprise towards the crown of Scotland for himself or no; and if he do, and the Duke be found very cold in his own causes, it shall not be amiss to let the Lord James follow his own device therein, without dissuading or persuading him anything therein.

“Item.—Finally, if he shall find any disposition in any of them to rid away the French there, he may well accelerate the same, with this persuasion, that if they tarry until the aid come out of France, they shall find these to abide longer than they would.”

No. V., page 114.

Intelligence from Scotland.

The paper quoted in this volume, under the title “Intelligence out of Scotland,” contains the journal of one of Cecil’s numerous spies. It is dated and marked with his own hand; and although its information is not implicitly to be relied on, it furnishes us with some curious details.

INTELLIGENCE OUT OF SCOTLAND THE 10TH NOVEMBER 1559.

First, the Earl Bothwell, the Lord Borthwick, and the Lord Seaton, are with the queen-dowager of Scotland, and taketh a plain part with her, and no other noblemen of Scotland. All the rest of the noblemen of Scotland taketh part with the Governor of Scotland.

“The governor’s eldest son, the Earls of Argyle, Huntly, Glencairn, the Lord Revill, [Ruthven,] the Prior of St Andrews, the Master of Maxwell, the Lord of Livingston, [Lethington,] are made

regents of the realm of Scotland by the Congregation, to have the governance of the same realm until they have a righteous prince amongst them; the which regents, with their trains, came to Edinburgh, *the 23d day of October last*, with twelve thousand men with them, and sat in council, and there deprived the said queen-dowager of all rule in Scotland; for that she did not keep promises with them, nor follow the counsel of the nobility of Scotland, for the weal of the realm, and the liberty of the same.

“At the coming of the said lords to Edinburgh, the queen, with her party, being three thousand French and four hundred Scots, removed to Leith.

“The last of October last past, in the night, the Earl Bothwell, accompanied with twenty-four men, met the Lord of Ormiston, accompanied with six men, about Haddington, and there took from him six thousand crowns sterling, which the said lord was carrying to the governor, and hurt the same lord upon the face with a sword sore; that he lieth upon the same at his house of Ormiston.

“The advertisements of the taking of the same money came to the governor, who sent his eldest son, the Master of Maxwell, the Prior of St Andrews, and others, being seven hundred men or thereabout, to the castle of Crichton, the Earl Bothwell’s chief house, distant from Edinburgh eight miles, who entered into the same, and put garrison into it upon Allhallows-day, and lay that night there, and came to Edinburgh on the morrow.

“Upon Allhallows-day, after the riding forth of the said governor, his son, and the others, the same was declared to the queen by a servant of the Bishop of Dumblain, and immediately after the same declaration, about one thousand five hundred French and Scotsmen issued out of Leith, and skirmished with about 11 c. [eleven hundred] Scotsmen that had laid two pieces of great ordnance upon a little hill beside Holyrood House, to shoot at Leith, and the Frenchmen won the one piece, and the other was bursted. And the same Frenchmen entered into Canongate, and spoiled the same to the port of the town, and slew twenty-one Scotsmen and three women, and six Frenchmen were slain at the same skirmish. And forty men of arms of France rode in at the Port, and went almost to the Tron, where they were put back by the governor and his party. The castle of

Edinburgh shot two cannons at the French party at the said skirmish, for the which the queen reprobred the Lord Erskine, who made answer, that he would shoot at any person that went about to annoy the town of Edinburgh.

"The 3d of November present, the governor sent his son and the Master of Maxwell, with three hundred horsemen, to Crichton castle, who, at their arrival there, sent to the Earl Bothwell, being at the castle of Borthwick, and willed him to come and take part with the lords, which he refused to do; and then the governor's son spoiled the castle of Crichton, and had the spoil and all his evidents to the governor.

"The 4th November aforesaid, the queen sent to the lords, and moved them to quietness, saying, she would keep all promises with them, if they would do the like; whereunto they would not agree, saying, they had found her so false and unnatural, that they would never trust her, nor have to do with her nor France, but by the sword.

"The 6th November instant, the Congregation and the French skirmished together, at which was slain Alexander Halyburton, brother to the tutor of Pittcur, one of the best captains of Scotland, and thirty footmen of Scotland, and divers taken; and of the French six or seven slain, and six taken. The Lords of Scotland perceiving that their skirmishes chanced not well with them, and that they were not in a perfect readiness for the wars, put all the ordnance in Edinburgh castle upon band of the Lord Erskine, to have the same safely delivered to them again, and the said 6th of November, about midnight, removed to Lithgow, where they remained in consultation and preparing for the wars, and will set up a coin, saying, they shall coyne a good part of their plate for maintenance of the Word of God, and the wealth of Scotland.

"The morrow next after, being the 7th of November, the queen removed to Edinburgh, about ten of the clock before noon, where she remaineth, having all things there at her will; the most part of the inhabitants of Edinburgh fled out of the town, with bag and baggage, before her coming hither, and put a great part of their best stuff in Edinburgh castle for the safety thereof.

"The Bishops of St Andrews and Glasgow are with the queen, and the

Bishops of the Out Isles and Galloway with the Lords and Congregation."

No. VI., page 118.

Treaty of Berwick.

At the time of the Treaty of Berwick, described in this volume, Cecil sent queries to the Scottish lords, to which he required them to make definite answers. The following paper, preserved in the State-paper Office, contains these questions and the replies. It is endorsed in Cecil's hand, "20th February 1559," and is in the handwriting of Sir R. Sadler:—

CERTAIN QUESTIONS PROPOSED TO THE LORDS OF SCOTLAND, ANSWERED AND RESOLVED BY THEM.¹

1. Whether they be able of themselves to resist the French power, and expel them out of Scotland?

Answer.—In respect of the fortresses which the French occupied in the time the queen-dowager bare rule, and yet do possess, we are not able without the queen's majesty's support to expel them, seeing the whole body of the realm is not as yet united.

Question.—What aid then is required?

Answer.—They require England to join with Scotland in league to expel these their enemies, and promise on their part to unite with England at all times against her enemies, and refer the specialty of the aid to herself.

Question.—What power, horse and foot, can they levy, and how soon?

Answer.—We would be able to bring five thousand men into the field, of which two thousand should watch and ward in company with the English soldiers according to the rate of their number, and with the other three thousand we shall keep the country in obedience, and make them be sure on all sides, night and day; that they shall need to attend upon nothing saving the French within the fort, and we shall meet their army at Acheson's Haven, the 25th day of March next coming.

Question.—How long they be able to abide and continue in the field?

Answer.—The whole nobility and landed men, with their households, shall remain continually, so long as the queen's majesty's power shall remain, how long soever it be, and the remanent number the space of twenty days after

¹ Scots Correspondence, 20th February 1559.

the meeting and joining of both the armies, upon their own charges, and at the end of the said twenty days, shall have in readiness two thousand footmen, or thereby, to receive wages of the queen's majesty, and continue so long as need shall be, and three or four hundred light horsemen, if it be thought convenient in like manner to receive wages. And as to the number of the nobility, landed men, and their households, which shall remain after the said twenty days, it shall be declared unto you before the end of the said twenty days, that you may be assured what you shall trust to.

Question.—What ordnance for battery, and what munition can they bring?

Answer.—It is not unknown to you that all the artillery and munition of Scotland is in the hands of the queen and the French, and [in] the strengths that are not in our hands.

Question.—What carriages can they furnish for the transport of great ordnance?

Answer.—The artillery and draught gear being brought to Acheson's Haven by sea, the lack of carriage horses supplied from thence to Leith.

Question.—What number of pioneers they can help us with?

Answer.—We believe, assuredly, that on the queen's majesty's charges, we shall levy three or four hundred, or more if need be.

Question.—What necessaries they have for scaling and assaulting of forts?

Answer.—They have none in store, but whatsoever is in the country will be at their command; and there is wood and broom enough within four miles of Leith.

Question.—How they can furnish the army with victuals for horse and men?

Answer.—Plenty of oats for horses; as to forage, they cannot say much till they see how far the country is destroyed; as to men, commissaries with a convenient sum of money should be sent into Scotland, to buy up victuals, of which there will be plenty. There is arrested in merchants' hands in Dundee two hundred tuns of wine, which will be delivered into the commissaries' hands for thirty-four pounds Scottish the tun—viz., eight pounds ten shillings sterling.

Question.—Where and when their power and ours shall join together?

Answer.—It shall be the greatest ease for us to meet you in some part of Lothian where ye think good, but

always we reserve that to your discretion.

Question.—Are they able to take and occupy Edinburgh? What as to the Lord Erskine?

Answer.—It is too great a hazard to attempt Edinburgh before the joining of the armies, because we doubt the French, as desperate men, will enterprise a battle. As to Lord Erskine, they will promise nothing assuredly, but hope he will be no enemy.

Question.—How the Borderers in Scotland may be reduced to take part with the said lords in this cause?

Answer.—They are labouring presently, and are in good hope to reduce the most part of them thereto; for the obstinate they will take order as you may advise.

Question.—What number of ships for the wars?

Answer.—No great number at their command, but there are some which will make forth against the French at their own adventure.

Question.—Where they shall be able to lodge in towns together six hundred demi-lances and six hundred light horsemen?

Answer.—They shall be placed in Edinburgh, if it may be had, failing thereof, in towns thereabouts, the most commodious to be left to them in all sorts.

Question.—Where we may best land our artillery and munition?

Answer.—At Acheson's Haven; there is good hard ground from thence to Leith.

No. VII.

Letters of the Lord James, afterwards Regent Moray.¹

THE LORD JAMES ST ANDREWS TO SIR WILLIAM CECIL.

“ Right Honourable Sir,—After all loving commendation. Albeit I have in a general letter with my brethren presently written unto you, and as the present bearer, my good friend, may sufficiently instruct you of all things needful, yet have I thought necessary to gratify in one part your good mind at all times shewn, not only towards our common cause, but also in particular towards me, which, as it is in all sorts undeserved on my side, so am I the more affected unto you therefor, which, God

¹ Preserved in the State-paper Office.

willing, you shall apperceive indeed, if ever the goodness of God shall grant, the good opinion and expectation that causeless ye have conceived of me, shall come to good maturity and fruit—God of His mercy grant it may. And as I have found this your good mind unrequired, having found it, I am bold to desire you most earnestly to continue in the same, as well towards the weal of our common cause as of myself, as I persuade myself ye will; and to that effect, I have my good friend the young Laird of Lethington, bearer hereof, and his proceeding's towards the premises, most heartily recommended him unto your honour's wisdom and good council, whom God mot prosper to His glory.—At Sanct Andrews the 15th day of November 1559.

“By your assured friend,
“JAMES SANCTAND.”¹

THE LORD JAMES TO THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

“Please your grace, after my departing from Berwick, I safely arrived in Fife, and found my Lord of Arran in St Andrews, ready to depart towards my Lord of Huntly in St Johnston, with whom I departed towards him, and after mutual conference, has found him to see throughout thir present matters, and willing to shew himself to the furtherance of the same at this present, which I suppose he testifies by his writings to the queen's majesty, and also to Mr Cecil with his own servant, who is also instructed with credit, and if it shall please your grace, in my opinion these writings should be kept in store for all adventures. Since my returning from my Lord of Huntly, which was the 1st of this instant, I have been continually travelling in the towns here upon the sea-coast for preparation of victuals against the arrival of the commissaries, and also upon the preparation of our folks, assuring ourselves of meeting upon the day appointed. And in case any let come on your side, (as God forbid,) it will please your grace to make us an advertisement, because we look for none, and so commits your grae to the protection of the Eternal. At Pittenweem the 8th March 1559.

“By your grace to command,
“JAMES STEWART.”

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil, Lord James St Andrews, 15th Nov. 1559.

LORD JAMES TO SECRETARY CECIL.

“After most hearty commendation, as travelling with my Lord Duke's Grace of Norfolk, and all times before, I have found the favour of God prospering His work in the hands of His servants, even so perceive I still and sensyne His blessing always to continue therewith. My Lord of Huntly, with a great part of the north, as I look for, will keep the affixed [time] betwixt my Lord Duke and us, whereof I trust you shall be certified by his own writing, which I would wish were kept in store. And further, I hope in God there shall be very few of the nobility that shall not join them at this time; and if God shall grant us good luck and success in this journey, I am persuaded the matter that all godly men so long have desired, and wise men travelled to bring to pass, shall be, by the tender mercy of God, most happily achieved, to the great comfort of us, and the great felicity of the ages to come; and seeing it cometh near the birth, let no earnest labourer (as you are) faint in the Lord's work; who mot prosper the same in your hands. From Pittenweem the 8th of March 1559.

“By your assured good friend,
“JAMES STEWART.”

No. VIII., page 119.

Character of the Earl of Huntly.

This nobleman, perhaps the most powerful baron in Scotland, has been somewhat undeservedly lauded. Like his brethren, he was crafty, selfish, and ambitious. The following letter from his brother, the Bishop of Caithness, and the interesting paper which follows it, disclose his secret transactions with the Lords of the Congregation, and throw light on the severity with which he was afterwards treated by Mary:

LETTER FROM A. GORDON TO THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

“After hearty commendations to your grace; it will please you to wit, that in consideration of the relation made by the queen-dowager to divers of your grace's countrymen, quha spak her in the castle of Edinburgh, that my lord my brother, the Earl of Huntly, would by no way assist or concur with us in defence of this our common and godly action, I will be so bold, with your grace's pardon, to assure you of the contrary. Notwithstanding the great policy

and craft used by the said queen-dowager to empesche the same, who has done utter diligence to break the whole nobility of his country against him, which was the principal and chiefest occasion of his tarry; who *beis* unfailand in our camp, the 20th or 21st of this present April, to assist and set forward these our proceedings and godly union, at the uttermost of his power¹

"Edinburgh, 18th April 1560."

The second paper to which I allude is endorsed by Randolph, THE REQUESTS OF THE EARL OF HUNTRY TO THE LORDS, and dated in Cecil's handwriting, part of which is torn away, 18th April 1560.

"Forasmuch as by the labour, persuasions, and suborning of the French part, and others their favourers and part takers within this realm, there is a con[tract] and league made by their means among a great number of the nobles of the north parts of this realm, certain clans, and islesmen of the same, that they shall maintain, and with their power extreme defend, the auld manner of religion, and French authority within this realm; nothingless to the resistance of my lord duke's grace, and others his part takers, nor for invading of me, my friends, and part takers, and destroying of our *rowmes* that shall assist with his grace, of the which they have begun one part already. Wherefore, the said Earl of Huntly, since he adventures his body, life, rents, and lands, with his whole friends that will do for him, desires that my lord duke, and others the noblemen assisters to his grace's proceedings, make him, his friends and part takers, an assured promise under their handwrits to their maintenance in their lives, rents, lands, and possessions. And that, by his grace and them, the said earl and his assisters might have the queen's majesty of England's aid and support when he shall [require] the same, as well for to defend their incursions and pursuits, as to pursue them and their *rowmes* that will not concur with him to the duke's grace's effect, and the maintaining the liberty of this realm, and commonweal thereof, so far as we are within the north parts of the mount.

"Item.—Desires in like manner, that where he understands the duke's grace, with his council, is already disponing to sundry men certain *rowmes* in these

north parts, and to them in special which shall be found of the said confederacy; that in that respect his grace, nor his council and part takers, shall dispone nothing of the lands and duties of the kirk escheats, and casualties of thir parts, but to such as shall be his concurrents, and join themselves with him to the forthsetting of the action of the common weal, or, at the least, without his [lordship's] consent and advice, and that within the shires of Aberdeen, Banff, Moray, Nairn, and Inverness.

"Item.—Because it is not unknown his lordship and his predecessors to have been, under his sovereign, the man to have had the supreme authority in the north in time by past, and power given to them by their sovereigns for the time, desires to have suchlike power and authority as before times, with assistance and maintenance of his grace and his assisters both of Scotland and England, so that not only shall any of his own pretend to disobey or ly aback in this action, but by the said power, assistance, and authority, he may inbring them with the rest of their adherents, so that the liberty and common weal of this poor realm might be more easily preserved, and he and his part takers may, through such authority and help, the more heartily concur and ware their lives, and hazard their heritages in the said action: And who shall be required by the duke, and the lords his grace's assisters, to concur in the forthsetting of the said action, and refuses the same, and the rest at his grace's command, shall be pursued by the said Earl of Huntly in that case; their escheats and *rowmes* to be disposed to him and such other gentlemen and barons that serves with him."

THE LORDS' ANSWER TO THE EARL OF HUNTRY.²

To the 1st.—The answer made is, "That by the band entered into by the Congregation, they are bound mutually to defend each other; and if Huntly joins them, he will participate in this obligation, and enjoy the benefit."

To the 2d.—"Huntly has seen the copy of the contract between them and the queen's majesty, by which she obliges herself to support and defend them; and if Huntly joins them, he will be included in the benefit of this contract as one of themselves."

¹ Endorsed by Cecil, Bishop of Athens to the Duke of Norfolk.

² Scots Correspondence, dated in Cecil's hand, 18th April 1560.

Where in the second article it is alleged that the said earl understands they are already disponing certain rowmes to sundry men in the north parts, . . . it is answered, "That the lords have made no disposition of anything to any persons, but only constitute factours, and no factours made of any rowmes in these parts; and his lordship coming and adjoining him to the said lords, no disposition of factorie shall be made by [contrary to] his advice."

To the 3d.—That he have the same authority as his predecessors have had before him in the north parts, it is answered, "That the lords as yet have never taken upon them the disposition of *escheats or office of lieutenandrie, fearing, if they would pretend any such matter, it would be sinisterly interpreted, and the adversaries would calumniate them as usurpers of our sovereign's authority.* Nevertheless, perceiving my Lord of Huntly's good affection to haste a moyen, whereby all men may be adjoined to this cause, they are content to grant to my lord at his coming hither to them, all and whatsoever things may so further the cause that he himself will think that they may do, remaining obedient subjects, and reserving their obedience to their sovereign; and for that they may see he requires this only for furtherance of the common cause, and not for any commodity, they will in this article follow his good advice and counsel after his coming. At which time, in this as in all others, he shall be satisfied."

NO. IX.

An Irish Ambassador in 1560.

The following extract from a letter addressed by Randolph to Cecil is amusing, in the vivid portrait it gives us of O'Neil's ambassador, and in shewing also that the Irish language was written and understood by the inhabitants of the north of Scotland as late, at least, as August 25, 1560, the date of this letter. It is preserved in the State-paper Office:—

"May it please you to understand that, the 16th of this present, there came to the Earl of Argyle, out of Ireland, an ambassador from O'Neil. What was his message, and effect of his embassy, your honour may perceive by these letters which the Earl of Argyle hath sent, beside also some other matter that he requireth to be advertised of

from your honour as you see time. The letter that he received from O'Neil he caused to be translated into English, and hath, notwithstanding, sent you the original, *ad faciendam majorem fidem*, and also for you to see the strangeness of their orthography: this he desireth to be sent unto him again.

"The manner and behaviour of him from whom the letter came is not so strange as it was wonderful to see the presence of his ambassador. A man that exceedeth many in stature. He walked afoot out of Erland hither alone; his diet, by reason of the length of his journey, so failed him that he was fain to leave his saffron shirt in gage. The rest of his apparel such, that the earl, before he would give him audience, arrayed him new from the neck downwards; for razor he would none; his lodging was in the chimney, his drink chiefly aquavite and milk. Though the message that he came of was such as the Earl of Argyle by no means will consent unto for divers respects; as, chiefly, the ungodliness of the person, and the worthiness of his sister, of whom I hear great commendation: yet will he not utterly shake him off, or give him any resolute answer, but intendeth awhile to entertain him, to see what good may be done upon him, either to bring him to God or more civility."

NO. X.

Mary's Aversion to Knox.

The following extract from a letter of Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, dated 13th July 1561, Paris, and preserved in the French Correspondence of the State-paper Office, evinces the strong aversion which the young Queen of Scots had conceived against this reformer, previous to her arrival in her dominions:—

"The said queen's [Scotland] determination to go home continues still; she goeth shortly from the court to Fescamp in Normandy, there to make her mother's funerals and burial, and from thence to Calais, there to embark. . . . The late unquietness in Scotland hath disquieted her very much; and yet stayeth not her journey. The 5th of this present, the Earl of Bothwell arrived here in post. . . . I understand that the Queen of Scotland is thoroughly persuaded that the most dangerous man in all her realm of Scotland, both to her intent there, and the dissolving of the

league between your maj: and that realm, is Knokes. And therefore is fully determined to use all the means she can devise to banish him thence, or else to assure them that she will never dwell in that country as long as he is there; and to make him the more odious to your maj: and that at your hands he receive neither courage nor comfort, she mindeth to send very shortly to your maj: (if she have not already done it) to lay before you the book that he hath written against the government of women, (which your maj: hath seen already,) thinking thereby to animate your maj: against him; but whatsoever the said queen shall insinuate your maj: of him, I take him to be as much for your maj: purpose,—and that he liath done, and doth daily, as good service for the advancement of your maj: desire in that country, and to establish a mutual benevolence and common quiet between the two realms, as any man of that nation: his doings wherein, together with his zeal well known, have sufficiently recompensed his faults in writing that book; and therefore [he] is not to be driven out of that realm.”

No. XI.

Mary and Lethington.

It has been stated in this volume, p. 140, that, previous to her setting out from France, Mary addressed letters of forgiveness and kindness to nearly all her subjects who filled offices of trust. The following letter she sent to Secretary Lethington. It is printed from a copy endorsed by Cecil, “Queen of Scots’ letter to the L. of Lethington, 29th June 1561, preserved in the State-paper Office:”—

“Lethington. Jay receu vostre lettre du xme de ce moys. Et vous employant en mon service et faisant bien suuyant la bonne volonté q m’asseurez en avoir; il ne fault point que vous craignez les calomniateurs ny rapporteurs, car ils n’auront jamais bonne part auprès de moy. Je prend garde aux effects devant q’adjouster foy en tout à ce que l’on me dit. Et quant au scrupule que pourroit proceder de l’acconitance qu’avez en Angleterre il cessera avec l’intelligence que vous y pouvez avoir. A quoy il vous est ayse remedier si vous voulez. Et pour ce vous avez este l’instrument et principal negociateur de toutes les pratiques que ma noblesse a

eu en Angleterre, si vous desirez que oultre ce que J’ay déjà oublé toutes offences passées comme Je vous ay escript cy devant, Je me fye à bon (effient) et me serve de vous, faictes que les ostages qui sont au dict pays en soyent retirez, et vous employez à dissoudre ce que vous avez moyenne et solicite en c’est endroict, avec tel effect, Je me puisse asseurer de vostre bonne affection. Vous avez l’entendement et dextérité de faire plus que cela, et ne se passe rien entre ma noblesse dont vous n’ayez cognissance, et que vostre advice n’y soit receu. Aussi Je ne veulx vous celer, que s’il se fait quelque chose qui n’aille droit par cy apres me fiant de vous, vous estez celluy à qui je m’en prendray le premier. Je veulx vivre doresnavant en toute amytie et bonne voisinance avec la Royne d’Angleterre; et suis sur mon partement pour passer en mon Royaume où j’espere estre danz le tems que J’ay mande par le Prieur de St Andrè.—A mon arrivée par dela jauray besoing trouver quelques deniers pour subvenir à ma maison, et autres necessitez. Il en est sort y depuis ung an une bonne somme du proffit de ma monnoye, e y a assui d’autres casualitez. Vous me ferez plaisir de tener la main que de coste ou d'autre J'en puisse trouver de prestz pour mon ayder promptement. Et cependant vous me scrivez et donnerez avis de tout. Jay veu par vostre lettre comme vous avez fait publier et executer celles que n’agueries je vous avez envoyées touchant les alienations des terres ecclésiastiques—Et quant à la declaration de mon intention plus avant, estant sur mon dict parlement Je lay remyse apres mon arrivée. Je feray bien ayse de voir et intendre comme les choses sont passés en cest endroict tant auparavant les troubles que depuis le commencement d’iceulx, priant Dieu, Lethington vous avoir en sa sancte garde. Escript à Paris, le xxix Jour de Jung, 1561.”

No. XII.

Elizabeth's violent refusal of a Passport to Mary.

It appears, from the following letter of Lethington to Cecil, dated at Edinburgh, 15th August 1561, that the English queen had so far suffered herself to be overcome by passion, as openly to declare to D'Osell that she would not suffer his mistress to come into her own dominions:—

"Sir,—Hither came yesternight from France a Scottish gentleman called Capt. Anstruther, sent by the queen our sovereign, who left her maj: (as he saith) at Morin, six leagues from the court at St Germains, where she had left the king, and was coming towards Calais, there to embarque. He hath letters to the most part of the noblemen, whereby she doth complain that the queen's majesty not only hath refused passage to Monsieur D'Osell, and the safe conduct which she did courteously require for herself, but also doth make open declaration that she will not suffer her to come home to her own realm; yet is her affection such towards her country, and so great desire she hath to see us, that she meaneth not for that threatening to stay, but taketh her journey with two galleys only, without any forces, accompanied with her three uncles, the Duke D'Aumall, the Marquis d'Elboef, and the Great Prior, one of the constable's sons, Monsieur Damville, and their trains, and so trust her person in our hands. In the meantime, thinking that the queen's maj: will by some means pratique the subjects of this realm, she hath written to divers, and specially those whom she knoweth most affectioned, to continue the intelligence, willing them in anywise that they receive no ambassador from her majesty, nor renew any league with her highness, unto such time as she be present with us: the bearer saith that she will arrive before the 26th day of this instant. What this message meaneth I cannot judge: I marvel that she will utter anything to us which she would have kept close for you: and if two galleys may quietly pass, I wish the passport had been liberally granted. To what purpose should you open your pack and sell none of your wares, or declare you enemies to those whom you cannot offend? It passeth my dull capacity to imagine what this sudden enterprise should mean. We have determined to trust no more than we shall see, yet can I not but fear the issue for lack of charges and sufficient power. If anything chance amiss, we shall feel the first dint; but I am sure you see the consequence. It shall be well done that the Q. maj: keep some ordinary power at Berwick, of good force, so long as we stand in doubtful terms, as well for safety of the peace as our comfort. The neighbourhood of your men will discourage our enemies and make us tha-

bolder. My wit is not sufficient to give advice in so dangerous a cast, but I mean well. God maintain his cause; and those that mean uprightly. I pray you send me your advice what is best to be done, as well in the common cause, as in my particular, who am taken to be a chief meddler and principal negotiator of all the practises with that realm. Though I be not in greatest place, yet is not my danger least, specially when she shall come home, having so late received at the Q. maj: hands (as she will think) so great a courtesy. This Capt. Anstruther hath also a commission to receive from the French captains the Castle of Dunbar, and the fort of Inchkeith, and to send home all the soldiers. I have heard that the queen meaneth to draw home the Earl of Lennox furth of England, and to make him an instrument of division in this realm, setting him up against the Duke of Chastelherault. I trust the queen's maj: will have good regard thereto. In anywise let me hear, I pray you, often from you. If I may receive every four or five days a line or two from you, it shall be my greatest comfort; and because I must now be jealous of my letters, I pray you make some mention in yours of the receipt of so many as I have sent you this month. (This is the third.) . . Edinburgh, the 15th day of August 1561.

"Yours at commandment,

"W. MAITLAND."

No. XIII.

Lethington and Cecil.

As an example of Lethington's lighter epistolary style, the reader may be interested in the following letter, written to Cecil when the Scottish secretary was in love with Mary Fleming, one of the queen's Marys, whom he afterwards married. It is amusing to find that he had chosen so grave a confidant as Cecil. There is preserved in the British Museum a pathetic letter of this Mary Fleming, written to Lord Burleigh, entreating him to use his influence with Morton, that the body of Lethington, her husband, might suffer no shame. It has been printed by Chalmers, from the original in the Cotton collection.—*Life of Mary*, vol. ii. p. 502.

LEDINGTON TO CECIL.¹

"SIR,—I have of late been somewhat perplexed, understanding that you were sick, the rather that I could not have certain knowledge whether it was the cough which universally did reign, or other more dangerous disease, which did trouble you. I am glad to hear, by the report of such as come from hence, that you have recovered your health, and yet will not be fully assured thereof, until such time as I shall see the same testified by some letter, written with your own hand. I am not *tam cupidus rerum novarum* that I desire any change; and if my fortune should be at any time to come in that realm, I wish not to have occasion to make any new acquaintance. I confess I have found in you some lacks, and points which I have wished to be reformed, and shall still find, so long as you do not fully satisfy my affections, (such is the nature of man and phylantye (*φιλαντεία*) which maketh us fancy too much our own conceptions.) Yet, I do not look for any full reformation of you in that behalf, and not the less when I do indifferently and without passion behold your proceedings; and even such as I appear most to mislike, I am constrained to think that, if any other occupied the same place, I might perhaps have matter ministered unto me of more misliking. Therefore, how far soever I mislike you, I wish you to do well to yourself, and suffer neither the evil weather nor evil world kill you. As there are in you many good parts which I require in myself, so I find in me one great virtue, whereof, for your commodity, I wish you a portion—to wit, the common affairs do never so much trouble me, but that at least I have one merry hour of the four and twenty; and you labour continually without intermission, nothing considering that the body, yea, and the mind also, must sometime have recreation, or else they cannot long last. Such physic as I do minister unto myself I appoint for you. Marry, you may, perhaps, reply that, as now the world doth go with me, my body is better disposed to digest such than yours is, (for those that be in love are ever set upon a merry pin,) yet I take this to be a most singular remedy for all diseases in all persons. You see

how I abuse my leisure, and do trouble your occupations with matters of so light moment. It is not for lack of a more grave subject, but that I purposely forbear it, not knowing in what sort I may touch it and avoid offence. I will, with better devotion, look for other matter in your next letter, than for any answer to this foolish letter of mine, and yet, rather to be advertised of your convalescence. You can impart those news to none that will be more glad of them. Like as, if you will command anything that lieth in my power conveniently to do, you will find none, next your son, over whom you have more authority. And so, after my most hearty commendations, I take my leave.—From Edinburgh, the last of February 1564.

"Yours at command,

"W. MAITLAND."

No. XIV.

Characteristic Letter of Knox.

The following letter of this reformer (alluded to in this volume, p. 179) is addressed to Randolph, and dated at Edinburgh, 3d —, 1564. Some few words are unreadable, but, as a whole, it is very characteristic:—

"Both yours are come to my hands, with your bow, for the which I heartily thank you. Rollet's tidings are as yet buried in breasts of two within this realm, but *Maddye* telleth us many news. The mess shall up; the Bishop of Glasgow and Abbot of Dunfermline come as ambassadors from the General Council. My Lord Bothwell shall follow with power to put in execution whatsoever is demanded and our sovereign will have done, and then shall Knox and his preaching be pulled by the ears. Thus with us raves *Maddye* every day, but hereupon I greatly pause not. The Earl of Lennox servant is familiarly in court; and it is supposed that it is not without knowledge, yea, and labour, of your court. Some in this country look for the lady and the young earl or it be long: it is whispered to me that licence is already procured for their hithercoming. God's providence is inscrutable to man before the issue of such things as are kept close for a season in his council; but, to be plain with you, that journey and progress I like not. The Q. maj: remains at St Johnston, as I hear, yet eight days, yea, and perchance

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, 28th February 1564-5.

longer : as for Edinburgh, it likes the ladies nothing. In these last ships from France and Flanders, I have received some news, and some are coming ; certain of the saltmaker's labourers are arrived with mattocks, schooles, and certain other instruments ; more are looked for : I fear their traffic shall be to make salt upon salt. Divine what I mean. I hear of credible report, and that of such as are privy in the court of France, that the journey of Loraine goes forward. Letters I received dated in . . . in Champagne, assuring that the king was so far in journey, if other impediments occurred not. The Papists of France (of Paris especially) threaten destruction to all Protestants. The Germans, almost in every city and province, amass men of war, and no man can tell at whose devotion. If ye know, I am content ; if not, my counsel is, you look to it. Two barges, in form and fashion like hoyes, came in our Firth, abone [above] the Inch, and viewed all places, Sunday and Monday last. They sailed from land to land, round about the Inch, but would suffer no man to enter in them ; and so are departed. Our Solan geese use to vesey [inspect] the Bass before the great company take possession : I say yet again, take heed. I hear (but not of certainty) that Sweden will yet visit us with an ambassador. I pray you yet again salute my Lord of Bedford, of whose good mind towards me I never doubted, and say to his lordship that I think I shall have as great need of comfort ere it be long, as that I had when his L. and I last parted in London, if God put not end to my battle shortly ; for here wanton and wicked will empires, as it were, above wisdom and virtue : God send remedy. And thus ye know a part of my mind ; and yet, if I were not . . . I would trouble you longer. My purpose is, if God permit, to be in Langton the 3d Sunday of May. You may appoint the place, and I will meet you : whom the Eternal preserve. Of Edinburgh, the 3d of this present (or instant) 1564.

"Salute in my name Mr — and the Italian, to whom great business suffers me not to write.

"Yours, to his power,
"JOHN KNOX."

No. XV., page 215.

Plot of Lennox and Darnley against Mary's Crown and Life.

In the letter from Randolph to the Earl of Leicester, which is quoted in the text, p. 215, the reader is aware that he alludes darkly to a plot of the king, and the Earl of Lennox, his father, to deprive the queen of her crown, perhaps of her liberty and life. "I know," says he, "these practices in hand contrived between the father and son to come by the crown against her will. . . . I know, that if that take effect which is intended, David shall have his throat cut within these ten days. *Many things grievous and worse than these are brought to my ears, yea, of things intended against her own person, which, because I think it better to keep secret than write to Mr Secretary, I speak not of them but now to your lordship.*"

It is of great importance in the question of Mary's guilt or innocence to ascertain the truth of the existence of such a plot against her crown and life by her husband the king, and his father, — and I have found amongst the valuable collections of Prince Labanoff a paper copied from the Archives of the House of Medici, which strongly corroborates it. I give it here with kind permission. It is thus entitled :—

AVVISI DI SCOTIA, DELLI 11, 13, AND 28,
DI MARZO, 1566. SOPRA GLI ANDAMENTI DI QUEL REGNO.

Li Ribelli di Scotia che stavano in Inghilterra, col consenso del nove Re di Scotia ritornorno a casa loro, e trattavano co il Re suddetto di darli la Corona hereditale, accio che lui restasse Reabsoluto, ancora che la Regina morisse senza figlioli.

Detto Re persuadendosi simil fatto, consentiva alla morte della Regina sua moglie, e già aveva consentito alla Morte De David Riccio, lo Secretario de detta Regina, et lei aveva fatto riserrar in una camera, con guardia d'Heretici, accio che li Cattolici non la potessero soccorrere, e fra tanto attendevano detti Heretici, a far che il stato tutto consentisse alla incoronazione di detto Re, et alla privazione del Governo di detta Regina. Al che non consentendo il Populo, e avendo il Re la mala persuasione fatta a gli da quelli tristi ribaldi, si pente dell' errore, e seno ando dalla Regina, alla quale dopo averla

salutata amorévolmente raconto tutto il successo, e gl'adimando perdona del animo suo tristo hauto contra di lei, la quale con piu buon animo, e lieta fronte che puote lo ricevette, dicendoli che non credeva che egli havesse mai hauto simile intentione contra di lei, et che se forse fosse incorso in qualche mancamento di fede, che pregava Iddio gli perdonasse, et lei non solamente gli perdonava ma etiam perdonava a tutti gli altri, che la perseguivano, e così subito tutti due si raconsiliorno et cercorno via di salvarsi.

Stando il Re con la Regina gli Heretici credevano che lui trattasse, accioche lei sotto scrivesse certi Capitole che essi adimandavano sopra la perdonanza, et retribuzione de suoi beni, il che dicendo il Re alla Regina che cosi aveva promesso di fare, lei subito diede modo al Re, che se ritornasse da loro con dirgli, che la Regina voleva fare ogni cosa, che a dimandavano, e così se ne ando il Re da essi heretici et lettoli il proposito che fu da loro creduto, gli exorto a mettere la Regina in liberta, promettendo lui di guardarla, che non potesse fuggire, al che loro per compiacere al Re consentivono, e se ne partirono lasciando la Regina in mano del Re suo marito.

Parliti gli heretici, il Re e la Regina mandorono subito per un Capitano loro confidente, il quale vinne con buon numero di soldati Catolici per una parte segreta, che non furono veduti dalli inimici, e gionte da loro maestra se ne fuggirono, a una Fortezza chiamata Don Bar, dove arrivarono al alba del giorno, et ivi aspettarono il soccorso di nove mille fanti Cattolici, con quali andorono contra detti Ribelli, et gli schacciarono di quel suo Regno, et sono ritornati detti Heretici in Inghilterra.

Ritorname il Re et la Regina a Lisleborgo, dove successe il suddetto, fecero tagliar la testa a cinque principali di quella Citta authori et inventori di simile impresa.

La Regina d'Inghilterra, quale era stata causa del tutto intendendo la pace fra il Re et Regina di Scotia, s'attristò molto et fece scrivere per il suo Secretario Cecille, per tutto il Regno, che la causa di tutto il suddetto, era perche il Re haveva trovato il detto Ricciolo a dormire con la Regina—il che non fu mai vero.¹

It is evident that these Advices from

¹ Filza 3 de Carteggio e affari con la Corte d'Inghilterra. Collated and certified by the Archivista, G. Tanfani.

Scotland were given by a person on the spot, and intimately acquainted with the object and circumstances of the plot against Riccio; and the statement it contains of Darnley's consent to the queen's death is of great importance—for this fact once admitted, and discovered by Mary, her position in reference to a husband whom she knew had plotted against her own life was materially altered.

NO. XVI., page 216.

Historical Remarks on Knox's implication in Riccio's Murder.

It has long been known that some of the principal supporters of the Protestant cause in Scotland were implicated in the assassination of Riccio; but it has hitherto been believed that their great ecclesiastical leader, Knox, was not privy to this murder. From the language in which the event is told in his History, it might be inferred, indeed, that he did not condemn the assassination of one whom he regarded as a bitter enemy to the truth.² "After this manner above specified," says he, "to wit, by the death of David Rizzio, the noblemen were relieved of their trouble, and restored to their places and rownes,³ and likewise the Church reformed, and all that professed the Evangel within this realm, after fasting and prayer, were delivered :" but in weighing this passage it is to be remembered that, although the Fifth Book of Knox's History was probably composed from notes and collections left by the Reformer, it was not written by him.⁴ The late Dr M'Crie, his excellent biographer, has this sentence upon the subject, which, from the authority deservedly attached to his life of Knox, may be taken as the present popular belief upon the point:—"There is no reason to think that he [Knox] was privy to the conspiracy which proved fatal to Riccio : but it is probable that he had expressed his satisfaction at an event which contributed to the safety of religion and of the commonwealth, if not also his approbation of the conduct of the conspirators."⁵

As Dr M'Crie had not the advantage

² Knox's History, p. 344.

³ Offices.

⁴ M'Crie's Life of Knox by Dr Crichton, pp. 250, 416, and Prefatory Notice to Bannatyne's Memorials, p. 20.

⁵ Life of Knox, p. 253, edited by Dr Crichton.

of consulting those letters upon this subject which I have found in the State-paper Office, and by which the whole secret history of the conspiracy against Riccio has been developed, we are not to wonder that he should have spoken so decisively of Knox's innocence of any previous knowledge of the plot. I shall now state, as clearly as I can, the evidence upon which I have affirmed in the text that he was precongnisant of the intended murder, adding, at the same time, some letters which may be quoted in his defence.

The reader is already aware that Riccio was assassinated on the 9th of March 1565-6; that Ruthven, Morton, and Lethington fled on the queen's escape, and meditated advance to Edinburgh, (March 18;) and that, while other accomplices secreted themselves in Scotland, Morton and Ruthven took refuge in England. Such being the state of things, on the 21st of March the Earl of Bedford, then at Berwick, of which he was governor, thus wrote to Cecil:—

" You shall understand that the Lord Ruthven is come hither for his own safety, who, passing through Tiviotdale, came to Wark castle, and being troubled with sickness, and therefore weak, tarried the longer upon the way thence afore he came here. I received him, (as I have learned that the ancient order is in like cases,) and so mean to do such other as shall for like purposes come. He keepeth most commonly his bed for that small time that he hath as yet tarried here, and therefore is not so likely to depart hence of some good time.

" The Earl Morton is gone towards Carlisle, and from thence will take his way towards Newcastle, and so hitherward for some time, to talk with the Lord Ruthven. The Lord Lindsay and the Laird of Liddington are both gone to the Earl of Athole for their safe-guard: Liddington, as I hear, will come hither if by any means he can, whereof, as it cometh to pass, you shall further understand.

" The Earls of Argyle, Glencairn, and Rothes have received their dress,¹ and so are in quiet, or, at the least, in hope they shall be quiet. The Earl of Moray, the Lairds of Grange and Patarro, and the Tutor of Pitcur, have refused the like dress as the other have received, seeming thereby the less willing to re-

¹ Pardon.

ceive the dress offered them, for that these lords their friends were excluded out of the favour and pardon, and so hardly put at; yet it is thought they will receive it, for so in any wise have these lords now abroad desired them.

" Their king remaineth utter enemy to these lords now abroad, notwithstanding his former doings with them. Hereof, and for that Mr Randolph writeth also more at large of the names of such as now be gone abroad, I shall not trouble you therewith."² . . .

This letter was written from Berwick eleven days after the murder, and about a week after the flight of the conspirators, here called "those that be gone abroad;" and we see that, in the last sentence, Bedford mentions to Cecil that he will not trouble him with any further details, as Mr Randolph was at that very time writing to him, and would send in his letter the names of the conspirators who had gone abroad.

This letter of Randolph's is accordingly in the State-paper Office, and pinned to it I found the promised list of names.³ I shall first give the letter, and then the "list." The letter, which is addressed to Cecil, is wholly in Randolph's hand; the list is in the hand of a clerk, who I find at that time was employed by Bedford in his confidential correspondence. The letter, which is addressed to Cecil, is as follows:—

RANDOLPH TO CECIL.

" Berwick, 21st March 1565-6.

" May it please your honour,
" Since Mr Carew's departure hence, this hath happened. The queen, to be revenged upon the lords that gave the last attempte and slew David, is content to remit unto the former lords, with whom she was so grievously offended, all that they had done at any time against her; who, seeing now their liberty and restitution offered unto them, were all content, saving my Lord of Moray, to leave the other lords that were the occasion of their return, and took several appointment as they could get it, of which the first was the Earl of Glencairn, next Rothes, Argyle,

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, Berwick, this 21st March 1565.

³ This list is now bound up with the volume. See the handwriting of letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bedford to Cecil, 27th March 1568.

and so every one after other, saving, as I said, my Lord of Moray, with him Patarro and Grayne, [Grange,] who, standing so much upon their honours and promise, will not leave the other without some likelihood to do them good.

"The lords of the last attemptate, which were these :—Morton, Ruthven, Lindsay, and Leddington, finding these men fall from them, whom they trusted so much in, and for whose cause they had so far ventured themselves, found it best to save themselves in time ; and, therefore, upon Sunday last,¹ every one of the four above named departed their several way, my Lord of Morton towards the west Borders, my Lord Ruthven through Tividale, and so came to Wark, and yesterday to this town ; the Lord Lindsay into Fife, Liddington to Athole, to my L. there, either to be saved by him, or to purchase his pardon of the Q. which is thought will be so hard as may be, and therefore is he looked for very shortly to be in this country, if he can escape.

"Besides these that were the principal takers in hand of this matter, there are also these :—the Laird of Ormiston, Hawton his son-in-law, Cawder his nephew, Brunston, Whytyngham, Andrew Car of Fawlsyde, Justice-clerk brother, George Douglas, and some other ; of the town of Edinburgh divers : so that, as I judge, there are as many like to take hurt in this action as were in the former. What is become of any of these I know not as yet, saving Andrew Car that came to this town with the L. Ruthven and his son.

"The Q. upon Monday last² returned to Edinburgh. In her company the Earls Bothwell, Huntly, Marshal, Hume, Seton, with as many as there [they] were able to bring with them. Where she was wont to be carried in a chair by four of her guard, she is yet able to ride upon a horse, though by her own account she hath not six weeks to her time. She lodgeth not in the abbey, but in a house in the town in the High Street. Her husband hath disclosed all that he knew of any man ; and yet hath given his hand, and subscribed divers bands and writings, testifying that to be his own deed, and done by his commandment. It is said that he gave him one blow himself ;

¹ i.e., Sunday, 17th March.

² i.e., Monday, 18th March.

and, to signify that the deed was his, his dagger was left standing in his body after he was dead. Their mind was to have hanged him, but because business rose in the court between the Earl Bothwell and such as were appointed to keep the house, they went the next way to work with him. . . . At Berwick, the 21st March 1565."

This letter explains itself, and needs no comment. The list of the names which was pinned to it is as follows. It bears this endorsement in the hand of Cecil's clerk :—

" Martii, 1565.

"Names of such as were consenting to the death of David.

"THE EARL MORTON.
THE L. RUTHVEN.
THE L. LINDSAY.
THE SECRETARY.
THE MR OF RUTHVEN.

LAIRDS

ORMISTON.

BRUNSTON.

HAUGHTON.

LOCHLEVEN.

ELPHINSTON.

PATRICK MURRAY.

PATRICK BALLANTYNE.

GEORGE DOUGLAS.

ANDREW CAR OF FAWDONSYDE.

JOHN KNOX, } Preachers.³

JOHN CRAIG, }

"All these were at the death of Davy and privy thereunto, and are now in displeasure with the Q. and their houses taken and spoiled."⁴

The inference from all this seems to me inevitable — namely, that, in an

³ Spelt thus in original :—

TH'ERLE MURTON.
THE L. RYVEN.
THE L. LYNNESY.
THE SECREATORY.
THE MR OF RYVEN.

LARDS

ORMESTON.

BRYANSTON.

HAUGHTON.

LOUGHLYVINE.

ELVINGSTON.

PATRICK MURRY.

PATRICK BALLENTYNE.

GEORGE DUGLAS.

ANDRO KAR OF FAWDONSYDE.

JOHN KNOX, } Preachers.

JOHN CRAG, }

"It is certain that this cannot mean that all whose names are to be found in this list were personally present at the act of the murder ; it should be understood to mean that "all these were at the murder of Davy or privy thereto."

authentic list sent to Secretary Cecil by Bedford and Randolph, the name of John Knox is given as one of those who were privy and consenting to the death of David Riccio. Now that these two persons, the Earl of Bedford and Randolph, were intimately acquainted with the whole details of the conspiracy, has been proved in the text.¹ To the proof there given I shall merely add part of a letter of Bedford to Cecil, written, it is to be observed, on the 11th of March, the unhappy man having been murdered on the evening of the 9th of March.

"After my hearty commendations—yesterday, in the morning, the Earl of Moray and the other lords, and the rest, entered into Scotland, and went that night to Edinburgh. . . . These lords make account to find great aid in Scotland, so as shortly things will fall out in more open sort than as yet, whereof from time to time you shall be advertised. . . . Since the writing hitherto, certain advertisement is come that David is despatched and dead. That it should be so you have heard before. The manner and circumstances thereof I will not now trouble you withal. By my next I hope I shall have somewhat else to say, and then will I write more at large. . . .

"F. BEDFORD.

"From Berwick this 11th March 1565."

The evidence, therefore, is direct and clear, and comes from those who must be esteemed the best witnesses in such a case. But there are other circumstances which strongly corroborate it, as far as Knox is concerned. The Reformer was then the great leader and adviser of the party of the Kirk. Riccio was regarded as its bitter enemy, an opponent of God, an oppressor and tyrant over God's people;² and we know that Knox conceived it lawful for private individuals to put such persons to death, provided all redress in the ordinary course of justice was rendered impossible.³ "The truth is," says Dr M'Crie, in his reflections upon the death of Beaton, "he [Knox] held the opinion that persons who, by the commission of flagrant crimes, had forfeited their lives, according to the law of God, and the just laws of society, such as notorious mur-

derers and tyrants, might warrantably be put to death by private individuals, provided all redress in the ordinary course of justice was rendered impossible, in consequence of the offenders having usurped the executive authority, or being systematically protected by oppressive rulers."⁴

Now, keeping this in mind, we find Morton and Ruthven, the leading conspirators, informing Cecil, in a letter from Berwick, written on the 27th March, that the great end proposed by them in the murder of Riccio was to prevent the universal subversion of religion within Scotland; and they add this remarkable sentence, "and to the execution of the said enterprise the most honest and most worthy were easily induced to approve, and fortify the king's deliberation in the premises; howbeit, in action and manner of execution, more were followed of the king's advice, kindled by an extreme choler, than we deliberated to have done."⁵ Who, then, were these persons named here, "the most honest and most worthy?" Evidently none else than the heads of the Protestant party, Morton and Ruthven, Lethington, Lindsay, and Ochiltree, the Barons of Ormiston, Brunston, Calder, Hatton, Lochleven, and others in Scotland, with Cecil himself, and Bedford and Randolph, the great supporters of the Protestant cause in England; and here it is to be noted that these Barons of Ormiston, Brunston, Calder, and Hatton were dear and intimate personal friends of Knox, whilst Ochiltree was his father-in-law. The Reformer, also, as we have seen, was the confidential correspondent of Bedford and Cecil, the associate in the common cause for the support of religion with Morton and Lethington, and undoubtedly the most powerful and influential of all the ministers or leaders of the Kirk. If called upon, therefore, to believe that the list which implicates him is a forged document, and that he had no foreknowledge of the murder of Riccio, we are to believe that in a plot formed by the party of which he was the leader, in which all his friends were implicated, the object of which was to support that form of faith which was dearer to him than life, by the commission of an act of which, from his avow-

¹ See p. 218 et seq.

² M'Crie's Life of Knox, by Dr Crichton, p. 253

³ Ibid. pp. 25, 101, 171, 242.

⁴ M'Crie's Life of Knox, by Dr Crichton, p. 27.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 27th March 1565, Morton and Ruthven to Cecil.

ed principles, they knew that he would not disapprove,¹—they studiously declined his assistance, concealed all that was to happen, and preferred, for the first time in their lives, to act without him. This supposition seems to me, I confess, untenable; and when I find Bedford and Randolph transmitting his name as one of the conspirators to Cecil, I cannot escape from giving credit to their assertion.

Another corroboration of his accession to this conspiracy was his precipitate flight from Edinburgh with the rest of the conspirators, upon the threatened advance of the queen to the city. His colleague Craig, it is to be observed, who was afterwards accused by his parishioners as being too much a favourer of the queen, remained in the city; but Knox fled precipitately, and in extreme agony of spirit, to Kyle; and, as we have already seen, did not venture to return till the noblemen rose against the queen after the death of Darnley.² If he was not implicated, why did he take guilt to himself by flight?

There is a passage to be found in the manuscript history of Calderwood, which is worth noticing upon this point. It has been quoted by Dr M'Crie,³ and is as follows:—"King James the Sixth, having found great fault with Knox for approving of the assassination of Riccio, one of the ministers said, that the slaughter of David, as far as it was the work of God, was allowed by Mr Knox, and not otherwise."⁴ "Knox himself," adds Dr M'Crie, "does not make this qualification, when he mentions the subject incidentally." It is not clear, however, whether this sentence refers to Knox's allowance or approval of the murder before or after the deed. It is, lastly, to be remembered that Riccio was a Roman Catholic, consequently, in Knox's eyes an idolater; and that the Reformer and his party held that idolatry might justly be punishable by death. "Into

¹ Dr M'Crie, in noticing Knox's flight from Edinburgh, after the murder, states that "it is probable he had expressed his satisfaction at an event which contributed to the safety of religion and the commonwealth, if not also his approbation of the conduct of the conspirators." M'Crie's Life of Knox, by Dr Crichton, pp. 253, 254.

² See his prayer added to his Answer to Tyrie, quoted in M'Crie's Life, Note G to period 8th.

³ M'Crie's Life of Knox, by Dr Crichton, p. 254.

⁴ Calderwood, MS. ad annum 1591.

this sentiment they were led," says Dr M'Crie, "in consequence of their having adopted the untenable opinion that the judicial laws given to the Jewish nation were binding upon Christian nations, as to all offences against the moral law."⁵

Such is the evidence which appears to me conclusive in support of the fact stated in the text. Let me now mention two circumstances which may be quoted in defence of Knox, and in proof of his innocence of this charge.

The first list, including Knox's name as one privy to Riccio's death, is, as we have seen, preserved in the State-paper Office, attached to a letter, dated 21st March. But there is another list in the British Museum, dated the 27th of March, which does not include the Reformer's name, or that of Craig, his colleague. It is in the handwriting of Randolph, and is entitled, "The names of such as were doers, and of council, in the late attempt for the killing of the secretary David, at Edinburgh, 9th March 1556; as contained in the account sent to the Council of England, by the Earl of Bedford, lieutenant of the north, and Sir Thomas Randolph, ambassador from England to Scotland at the time, dated at Berwick, 27th March 1566." This account or letter of the 27th of March has been printed from the original in the Cotton collection,⁶ by Sir Henry Ellis, vol. ii. p. 207, along with the list of the names.

The second circumstance is this: when Morton and Ruthven fled to Berwick, and sent to Bedford a vindication of their proceedings, with the intent that he should communicate it to Cecil and Elizabeth, they positively denied that any of the ministers of Scotland were art and part in the conspiracy, and accused the Papists of having raised the report. "It is come to our knowledge (they say) that some Papists have bruited that these our proceedings have been at the instigation of the ministers of Scotland. We assure your lordship, upon our honour, that there were none of them art nor part of that deed, nor were participate thereof."⁷

And now it may be asked, Why do

⁵ M'Crie's Life of Knox, by Dr Crichton, p. 246.

⁶ Caligula, B. x. fol. 337.

⁷ Harleian, No. 289, fol. 96, endorsed in Cecil's handwriting, "Copy of Instructions to my Lord of Bedford, from the Lords of Morton and Rewhen, (Ruthven,) 1566." This date of the year is not in Cecil's hand.

you reject the evidence of this second list, and why are we not to believe this solemn declaration, absolving the ministers of Scotland, and of course Knox with them, from all participation in the murder? To this I answer, that there is no evidence to raise doubt that the list given on the 21st March was written in good faith, while the event was yet new, after the arrival of Lord Ruthven, and without any object but that of transmitting information to *Cecil*; while that of the 27th March, sent to the *Council of England*, was carefully prepared after the failure of the conspiracy by the escape of the queen, and when the cautious and politic Morton had reached Berwick. That these lords would have an especial object in keeping the names of Knox and Craig out of the list is evidenced by the above extract, and that they would have little scruple to such a suppression is clear from the manner in which they submit their narrative to *Cecil*, to be amended and qualified at his pleasure. That the secretary of Elizabeth did modify and recast the story after the failure of the conspiracy, and with the approbation or by the directions of Elizabeth, is expressly asserted by one who appears to have had an intimate acquaintance with the whole plot against Riccio. "La Regina d'Inghilterra," says he, "quale era stata causa del tutto, intendendo la pace fra il Re e Regina di Scotia, s'attristò molto e fece scrivere per il suo Secretario Cecilie, per tutto il regno, che la causa di tutto il suddetto, era perchè il Re haveva trovato il detto Ricciolo a dormire con la Regina. Il che non fu mai vero."¹ The extent to which this modification and alteration was not only permitted, but invited, to be carried, may be gathered from a passage in a letter of Morton and Ruthven to Secretary *Cecil*, sending him their account of the conspiracy and murder.² "If [say they, alluding to their enclosed narrative] there be anything that be hardly written, that might have been *cuthit*³ in gentler terms, we will most humbly request your honour to supply us therein, to amend and qualify as your wisdom thinks good, anything that you think

extreme or rudely handled.—It is our meaning, after the return of your honour's answer with this copy corrected, if so you find good, to send copies of that matter in France, Scotland, and such other places needful, as shall be thought necessary for staying of false and untrue reports and rumours."—And lastly, it is quite evident, from a passage in Bedford's and Randolph's letter of the 27th March, giving the account of the murder, and sending the list of the names, that the chief authorities consulted, for both account and list, were Morton and Ruthven, whose object it was to suppress the names of the ministers which appeared in the first list.⁴

So far then as to the preference given of the first list to the second: but then comes the question, Why not believe Morton, when he states, upon his word of honour, that none of the ministers of Scotland were art and part of that deed? I answer, because according to Morton's notions, being art and part, or participate in any action or crime, was a totally different thing from being privy to it, or cognisant of it before it was committed. Morton, according to the distinction which he made on his own trial, might have asserted with perfect honour that neither Knox nor any of the ministers were participate in Riccio's murder, and yet he may have been perfectly aware that Knox was privy to the murder, knew that it was about to be committed, and, according to the expression used to the king by one of their number, allowed of it, that is, gave a silent consent to it, so far as he considered it to be the work of God, for the destruction of an enemy of the truth and an idolater.—I say confidently, Morton made this distinction, because he tells us so himself in his own trial and subsequent confession. "When," says Spottiswood,⁵ "the Earl of Montrose, Chancellor of the Assize, declared him [Morton] convicted of counsel, concealing, and being art and part, of the king's murther, at these last words he shewed himself much grieved, and beat-

¹ *Avvisi di Scotia*. See postea, p. 403.
² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton and Ruthven to *Cecil*, Berwick, 2d April 1566. Endorsed by *Cecil's* clerk, "Earl Morton and Lord Ruthven to my Mr, with the Discourse touching the killing of David."

³ Expressed.

⁴ Bedford and Randolph say, "Having conferred the reports from abroad, which came to our knowledge, with the sayings of those noblemen, the *Lord Morton* and the *Lord Ruthven*, that are present, and of them all, that which we have found nearest to the truth, or, as we believe, the truth itself, have here put them in writing."—27th March 1566.—Ellis, vol. ii.

⁵ Spottiswood, p. 313.

ing the ground once or twice with a little staff he carried in his hand, said, ‘*Art and part, art and part! God knoweth the contrary.*’—“Then it was said to him, Apparently, my lord, ye cannot justly complain of the sentence that is given against you, seeing that with your own mouth ye confess the foreknowledge and concealing of the king’s murder.—He answered, I know that to be true, indeed: but yet they should have considered the danger that the revealing it would have brought to me at that time. . . . And howbeit they have condemned me of art and part, foreknowledge, and concealing of the king’s murder, yet, as I shall answer to God, *I never had art or part, red or counsel, in that matter. I fore-knew, indeed, and concealed it*, because I durst not reveal it to any creature for my life.”¹

It is perfectly clear, therefore, that Morton’s declaration, that none of the ministers of Scotland were art and part of Riccio’s murder, does not necessarily imply any declaration that Knox had not a foreknowledge of the murder; on the contrary, it is quite consistent with his having known it, and, according to the term used by one of his brethren to James, allowed of it.²

No. XVII., page 234.

Joseph Riccio and Joseph Lutyni.

Joseph Riccio, the brother of David Riccio, came into Scotland with Monsieur de Mauvissiere early in April 1566;³ on the 26th April he was made secretary in his brother’s place; and on the 20th June Drury informed Cecil that he was growing apace into favour. Joseph Lutyni was a gentleman in the Scottish queen’s service, an intimate friend of Joseph Riccio.⁴

On the 23d January 1566-7, Sir William Drury addressed the following letter to Cecil:—

DRURY TO CECIL.

“*Berwick, 23d January 1566.*

“Right Honourable,—As this bearer, Mr Throckmorton, hath, by some necessary business of his own, occasion to re-

pair to the court, so have I something not unmeet to advertise, which is, that at my arrival here, my Lord of Bedford being departed, I found here one Joseph [Lutyni] an Italian, and a gentleman who had served the Queen of Scots, and depesched with her good favour and license towards France, about certain of her grace’s affairs, as by the copy of his passport, accompanied herewith, may appear; who taking this town in his way, through weak constitution of health, made his stay here for his better recovery; in which meantime I received a letter from the Queen of Scots, purporting a request to apprehend and stay him, for that he had, against the laws, taken goods and money from some of his fellows, as by the copy of the letter sent herewith your honour may be informed at length, which since, as appeareth by one that pursueth him, the queen’s tailor, is but upon some old reckoning between them; and therefore giveth me to think, by that I can gather as well of the matter as of the gentleman, that it is not it that the queen seeketh so much as to recover his person. For, as I have learned, the man had credit there; and now the queen mistrusteth lest he should offer his service here in England, and thereby might, with better occasion, utter something either prejudicial to her, or that she would be loath should be disclosed but to those she pleaseth. Whereupon I have thought good to stay the man till such time as the queen’s majesty’s pleasure, or my lords of the council, be signified unto me, which the sooner it be the more shall the poor stranger be eased.

“The occurrents are,—the Lord Darly lyeth sick at Glasgo of the small pox, unto whom the queen came yesterday: that disease beginneth to spread there. The Lord Morton lyeth at the Lord of Whytinghamie’s, where the Lord Bodwell and Ledington came of late to visit. He standeth in good terms for his peace. Here we look for Ledington or Melvyn very shortly to repair. This evening arrived here the ambassador of Savoy, Monsieur de Morett. The return this way of Monsieur le Croc is also looked for here. Thus having nothing farther to trouble your honour, I humbly take my leave. From Berwick, this 23d January 1566.⁵

“WILLIAM DRURY.”

¹ Bannatyne’s Memorials, p. 319.

² M’Crie’s Life of Knox, by Dr Crichton, p. 254.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, April 20, 1566.

⁴ Ibid, June 20, 1566.

5 State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil.

Endorsed by Cecil's clerk, "Mr Drury, marshal of Berwick, to my Mr ——
23d January 1566."

We hear no more of this Italian till the 7th February 1566-7, when Drury wrote as follows to Cecil on the subject:—

DRURY TO CECIL.

"Berwick, February 7, 1566-7.

"It may please your honour to be advertised.—This day, immediately after my letter despatched to the L. Lethington, in answer of one of the queen's and another of his, tending both to one effect, for the delivery of the Italian Joseph, the very copy whereof I send herewith, I received even then one from your H. of the last of January, mentioning some direction of answer concerning the said Italian." Drury proceeds to state that he had not been able to find out from the stranger any matter of much moment. He then adds, "He (the Italian) doubteth much danger; and so affirmeth unto me that if he return, he utterly despaireth of any better speed than a prepared death."¹

On the 19th of February 1566-7, Drury again thus wrote, touching the same Italian, to Cecil:—

DRURY TO CECIL.

"Berwick, February 19, 1566-7.

"It may please your H. to be advertised that I have received your letter of the 13th the 18th of this present, I having before returned the Italian to the queen, sending a gentleman with him, as well to see him safely delivered unto her, as to put the L. of Ledington in mind both of the queen's promise, whereof I doubted not, as of his own, that satisfying the debt, he should be in safety returned or restored to his liberty."² . . .

Lastly, on the 28th February 1566-7, Drury addressed a letter to Cecil, giving in its first paragraph, which follows, the sequel of the Italian's story, his return to Scotland, his examination by Bothwell, and his courteous dismissal:—

DRURY TO CECIL.

"It may please your honour to be advertised that the Italian here stayd, which the Queen of Scots by her letters

required, I did send him unto her by a lieutenant of this garrison. She saw him not, but caused the Earl Bodwell to deal with him, who offered him fair speech to have him to tarry, which he would not yield unto; he satisfied such debt as the tailor could demand of him, others demanding of him nothing. The queen willed to give him 30 crowns, and hath returned him again unto me, who minds to-morrow to take his journey towards London, very well contented, as he seemeth, to have left Scotland."³

Having thus given all the letters which relate to this obscure matter, in order that the reader may form his own opinion, I conclude this note by the letter of Joseph Riccio to Joseph Lutyni, the Italian in question, part of which has been quoted in the text. It is endorsed by Cecil thus, "Joseph Riccio, the Queen of Scots' servant."

JOSEPH RICCIO TO JOSEPH LUTYNI.

"SIGNOR JOSEPH,

"Io ho ditto a la Regina e a Thimoteo che voi m'havete portato via i miei denari, e la causa che io lo ditto e per quel, che voi intenderete.

"Quando noi fumo tornati di Starlino Thimoteo domando dove erano i vostri cavalli e le vostre robe. Io li dissi che le vostre robe erano drento il vostro coffano, e Lorenzo Cagnoli li disse che voi havevi portato tutto con voi, insieme coni vostri cavalli, e che voi l'havete ditto, 'io ho bene abuzato il segretario perche pensa che le miei robe siano drento il mio coffano, ma' non ve niente.'

"Quando Thimoteo intese questo comincio a dire, 'Così m'havete abuzato, Mr Segretario, la regina me ne fara la ragione,' e cosi trova Bastia e lo fa dire a la Regina, ch'io l'havevo assicurato, che voi eri andato per suoi affari, e che su quello m'haveva prestato cento scudi, e tutti comincioro a dire che li era qualche cattivaria, e chio la sapeva e che voi havevi buttato le mani nelli pappieri della Regina; e io, che non voleva esser suspitionato, comincio a dire che voi m'havevi portato via sei Portoghesi, e cinque nobili, e che m'havete promisso di mi lassare i vostri cavalli, e la Regina subbito mi dimanda 'Dove sono i miei braccialetti?' e io li dissi che voi li havevi portati conesso voi, e che erano drento la borsa con i

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Drury to Cecil, 7th Feb. 1566-7.

² Ibid., Feb. 19, 1566-7.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., 28th February 1566-7.

miei denari, e Bastia comincia a dire che voi li dovevi sesanta franchi, e cominciano a dire tutti, bisogna mandarli appresso, e fanno tanto, che la Regina comanda a Ledinton di fare una lettera per vi fare arrestare per camino.

“In questo mezo, Monsieur di Morett e arrivato qui, il quale dice che voi li havete ditto, che io ero causa, che voi fate questo viaggio.—Pigilate guardia come voi havete parlato, perche se voi dite per quello che andavi, noi sareme tutti due in gran pena. Io ho sempre ditto che voi eri andato per pigliar denari, e per lassar passar la collera della regina che l'haveva contra di voi, e chio vi haveva consigliato cosi, e chio vi haveva prestato denari per far questo viaggio, la somma di sesanta scudi e due Portoghesi, perche ancora voi potrete dir cosi, e io o ditto che i denari che voi m'havete portato, per che voi me li avette resi quando voi füssi tornato di francia; e cosi voi et io saremo tutti due scusati. E se voi fate altramente voi sarete causa della mia ruuina, e penso che voi non mi vorreste vedere in ruuina. Per Famor di dio fate come s'io füssi vostro figluolo, e vi prego per l'amor di dio e della buona amisitia che voi m'havete portata et io a voi, di dire come io vi mando, coe di fare questo viaggio per ritirare i vostri denari, e per lassar passar la collera a la Regina, e la sospittio che ella haveva di voi, e che i denari che io o ditto che voi m'havete pigliato, che voi l'havevo pigliati per paura che nonvene mancasse per fare il vostro viaggio, e che voi me li haveste resi quando voi füssi tornato, e che non bisognava che io v'havessi fatto un tal brutto,¹ e che voi sete homo de bene, e che non li vorreste haver pigliati, sensa rendermeli, a causa che io ero tanto vostro compagno, voi non havette mai pensato che io ne havessi fatto un tal brutto. Et vi prego di non volere esser causa della mia ruuina, e se voi dite cosi come vi mando sarete scusato, e io ancora.

“La regina vi manda ci pigliare, per parlar; con voi pigliate guardia voi, che voi la conoscete, pigliate guardia che non v'abbuzzi delle sue parole, come voi sapete bene; e m'ha detto che vuol parlare a voi in secreto, e pigliate guardia dell'i dire come vi ho scritto, e non altramente, a fin che nostra parola, si confronti l'una e l'altra, e ne voi ne io non saremo in pena nessuna, e vi prego di fare quanto v'ho scritto e non altramente.

¹ Sic in original.

mente. Fatemi intendere innanzi che voi siete qui, la vostra voluntà, et vi prego de haver pietà di me e non voler esser causa della mia morte, e facendo come io vi mando non sarete niente in pena ne io ancora, e io vene sarò sempre obligato, e troverete chio lo conoscero d'una maniera, che voi vene contentrete di me, e vi prego di mi volere scrivere quello che voi volete dire, a fin che io non sia piu in questa pena che io sono innanzi che voi arrivate qui, per homo express.

“Altra cosa non vo da scrivere per adesso, perche velo diro quando sarete qui, e vi prego di haver pietà di me, e di voi, perche se voi dite altramente di quel che io v'ho scritto, sarete in pena si ben come me.

“Pregando dio che vi dia contentezza di ed lilemburgh questa domenica.

“Vro come buon fratello,

“JOSEPH RICCIO.

“Viprego di brugiar la littera appresso che voi l'havevo letta.”²

No. XVIII., page 238.

Darnley's Murder.

I have stated the fact of the king having been strangled, and have added some new particulars regarding the murder, not only on the authority of a letter of Drury to Cecil, but from what I consider a still more unexceptionable piece of evidence, the assertion of Morett, the Savoy ambassador, who was on the spot, and had an opportunity of making himself acquainted with all the circumstances. As this point has been controverted, and some obscurity still hangs over the mode in which the murder was completed, I am happy to be able to publish the following curious and authentic extract from a letter, dated at Paris, 16th March 1567. It forms part of the collections of Prince Labanoff, the original being amongst the Medici papers, to which the prince had access. The letter was written by the Papal Nuncio, at Paris, to the Grand Duke; and after stating the arrival of Father Edmonds and Monsieur de Morett, the ambassador at Paris, with some other particulars, which I need not mention, it proceeds thus:—

“Quanto al particular della morte du quel Re, il ditto Signor di Moretta ha

² State-paper Office. The letter is thus endorsed in Cecil's hand, “Joseph Riccio, the Queen of Scots' servant.”

ferma opinione, che quel povero Principe, sentendo il rumore delle genti che attorniavano la casa, e tentavano con le chiave false apprir gl'usci, volse uscir per una porta che andava al giardino in camicia, con la peliccia, per fuggire il pericolo, e quivi fu affogato, e poi condotto fuori dal giardino; in un piccolo horto fuori dalla muraglia della Terra, e che poi con il fuoco ruinassero la casa per amazzar il resto ch'era dentro, di che se ne fa conjectura percio che il Re fu trovato morto in camicia, con la peliccia a canto, et alcune donne che alloggiavano vicino al giardino, affermano d'haver udito gridar il Re—‘Eh fratelli miei habbiate pietà di me per amor di colui, che ebbe misericordia di tutto il mondo,’ et il P. Edmondo m'affirma, che il Re questa mattina, haveva secondo il suo solito uida la messa, e che era stato sempre allevato della madre Cattolicamente ma che per desiderio di regnare alle volte dissimulava l'antica religione, se, così è degni sua divina maesta haver misericordia di quella povera anima. . . .

“*Parigi, 16 de Marzo 1567.*”

Collated and certified by the Archivista, G. Tanfani, 17th February 1840.

The following letters, from Drury to Cecil, give us some additional particulars relative to the murder of the king, and Bothwell's trial and conduct after it:—

DRURY TO CECIL.¹

“*Berwick, February 28, 1566-7.*”

“May it please your honour, &c. . . .

“There hath been other bills bestowed² upon the church doors, as upon a tree called the Tron, wherein they speak of a smith who should make the key, and offers, (so there might be assurance of the living that by proclamation was offered,) he and others will with their bodies approve these to be the devisers, and upon the same venture their lives.

“There was at the meeting at Dunkeld, the Earls Moray, Morton, Athole, and Caithness, the L. Oglebie, the L. Glammis, Lindsay, and others. John Hepburn, sometime captain under the Earl Bodwell of the Hermitage, is thought to be one of the executors of this cruel enterprise; there is one Hughe Leader also suspected. I am promised to understand the certainty. His servant, Sandy Duram, a Scottish man, is

thought also to know some part. I will not write of so much as the Scots speak themselves, and some of them of credit.

“Standen and Nelson, with some others that served the Lord Darnley, as I hear, are referred for their wages to the Provost of Edinburgh. The Lord of Craigmillar, and the Earl Bodwell, hath promised to give Standen a horse. Hudson, a man of good years, with the rest of the musitaners, came this other day to Seton, to the queen, and required her licence that they might repair into their country. She dissuaded them to the contrary, saying unto them, You have lost a good master, but if you will tarry, you shall find me not only a good mistress, but a mother. But they mind again to move her, and, as I hear, minds to return. There is with her at Seton, Argyle, Huntly, Bodwell, and Livingston; the Lord Seton is gone to Newbottle, having left the whole house to the queen; so she is there of her own provision, and minds, as I am advertised, to tarry there till near unto Easter. There is in hand to have the lords assemble in Edinburgh. She hath twice sent for the Earl of Moray, who stayeth himself by my ladie in her sickness. It is said that the Lord Fleming shall be the Earl Bodwell's deputy at Alnwick, for suppression of the rebels of Liddesdale, and that certain of the soldiers are gone from Edinburgh to the Hermitage there to remain.

“There was a rich ship of Shetland, bound to Flanders, lost this last week at Holy Island, receiving a leak, coming from Leith. She was laden with falls, hides, and leaden ore. The Frenchmen that I wrote of in my last letters, that took shipping at Leith, have been put in by weather into the Holy Island, and there have remained these eight days past.

“Edward Collingwood, one of this garrison horsemen, is returned from the Earl Bodwell, having remained with him in Scotland this quarter of this year. I have upon respects committed him to ward: by my next letters your honour shall understand more. The gates of Seton are very straitly kept. Captain Cullen, with his company, have the credit nearest her person.

“The Earl of Bodwell was on Thursday at Edinburgh, where he openly declared, affirming the same by his oath, if he knew who were the setters up of the bills and writings, he would wash

¹ State-paper Office, B.C.

² Sic in original.

his hands in their blood. His followers, who are to the number of fifty, follow him very near. Their gesture, as his, is of the people much noted. They seem to go near and about him, as though there were that would harm him; and his hand, as he talks with any that is not assured unto him, upon his dagger, with a strange countenance, as the beholders of him thinks. Even as the Lord Darnley, and his servant William Taylor, lay in the house in distance one from the other, even so, as also otherwise,¹ were they found together. Signior Francis, as I hear, minds to pass this way within six or eight days.

"I send your lordship here the copy of some of the bills set up, whereby you may see how undutifully the doers of the same doth behave themselves against their sovereign. I have thought it my part as well to send you this, as I have done in the rest, for that I would, if you should so think it meet that her majesty, my sovereign, should understand all that comes to my knowledge of the proceedings in these parts. The Lady Bodwell is, I am by divers means informed, extremely sick, and not likely to live. They will say there, she is marvellously swollen.—Even now is brought me that the queen came upon Wednesday at night to the Lord Whawton's² house, seven miles off this side; dined by the way at a place called Tra- nent, belonging to the Lord Seton, where he and the Earl of Huntly paid for the dinner, the queen and the Earl Bodwell having, at a match at shooting, won the same of them. There is a proclamation made in Edinburgh, forbidding all persons for raising up any of the stones or timber at the house where the L. Darnley was murdered. There is one of Edinburgh that affirms how Mr James Bafourde bought of him powder as much as he should have paid three score pounds Scottish, but he must par- forme³ it with oyle to that value. Bafourde came to Edinburgh upon Wednesday at night, accompanied to the Tower with thirty horsemen. When he was near unto the Tower, he lighted, and came in a secret way; [one] is now come to me of this Tower that saw him when he came—he is hateful to the people. This person of this Tower assures me also that yesterday, being

Thursday, before he departed thence, he saw a bill, having been set up the night before, where were these letters written in Roman hand, very great, M. R., with a sword in a hand near the same letters; then an L. B., with a mallet near them, which mallet, they, in their writing, called a mell. These being even now brought me, and affirmed by him that saw it, I have also thought it my part to advertise your honour of, that her maj., my sovereign, may know all that passes, as much as comes to my knowledge, wherein I think I do my duty; which, if I understand from you that it be not so taken, I shall cease from it, and do according to your direction; for I only desire from your honour that I may from time to time receive your advice how best I may here employ my time to deserve her majesty's favour and liking. How I have spent my time sithence my last coming, in remedying of things needful for her highness's service, your honour may by others understand.

"I have received divers requests made unto me by them that hath come from Scotland for the receiving of Stan- den and his company. I have answered, I will neither advise them to come, nor promise them any favour; and minds, if they come, to commit them to ward, till I understand from you her majesty's pleasure, which it may please you to signify unto me.

"The L. of Cessford and Fernyhirst, with the chief of both parties, are now at Edinburgh, for the continuance of the agreement amongst them, which agree- ment, as it is thought, will breed no great good to the queen's maj. my so- vereign her subjects upon the Borders; for the being agreed, they will rob and spoil faster by their reding.⁴ . . . &c.

"W. DRURY."

NO. XIX., page 243.

Bothwell's Trial.

The following is the letter to Cecil, alluded to in the text:—

DRURY TO CECIL.⁵

"15th April 1567.

"Right Honble,—The queen's ma- jesty's letter, directed to the Queen of

¹ Sic. in original. There must be some mistake in Drury's mode of expressing himself, as the text implies a contradiction.

² Probably Hawton. ³ Parfume.

⁴ By their reding, i.e., by their agreement—in consequence of their agreement they will be able to rob the faster.

⁵ State-paper Office, B.C.

Scots, I received the 11th hereof, at x of the clock, which forthwith I discharged by the Provost Marshal here, who in mine opinion was not the unmeetest I could choose for the purpose.

"He arrived at the court the 12th, at six in the morning, and then used his diligence immediately to deliver his letter, which he had in charge, to the queen, attending some good space in court, procuring all that he might by the means of such as were near her person, who told him it was early, and that her majesty was asleep, and therefore advised him to tarry some time thereabouts, till she arose, which he did, going out of the court into the town, and shortly after returned, she being not yet risen, and therefore walked about till nine or almost ten o'clock, when all the lords and gentlemen were assembled taking their horse; and then, thinking his opportunity aptest, going into the court as a little before he did, (the contents of the letter he brought being conjectured and bruted to be for stay of the assize,) was denied passage into the court in very uncourteous manner, not without some violence offered; which, seeing he could not be permitted to have recourse as all other persons, whatsoever they were, he requested that some gentleman of credit would undertake faithfully to deliver his letter, from the queen's majesty of England, to the queen their sovereign, which none would seem to undertake.

"Upon this came unto him the Parson of Oldhamestock, surnamed Hepborne, who told him that the Earl Bodwell had sent him with this message, 'that the earl, understanding he had letters for the queen, would advise him to retire him to his ease, or about some other his business, for the queen was so molested and disquieted with the business of that day, that he saw no likelihood of any meet time to serve his turn till after the assize.'

"Then came the Lord of Skirling, who asked him if his letter were either from the Council or the queen's majesty: he told him from the queen's majesty only. Then, said he, ye shall be soon discharged; and so returning into the court, desired the said person to keep him company at the gate, which he did; and there with espying a Scottish man whom he had for his guide, took occasion to reprehend and threaten him of hanging, for bringing English villains as sought to and procured the

stay of the assize, with words of more reproach.

"In this instant Ledington was coming out, and Bodwell with him, at the which all the lords and gentlemen mounted on horseback, till that Ledington came to him demanding [of] him the letter, which he delivered. Then Bodwell and he returned to the queen, and stayed there within half an hour, the whole troop of lords and gentlemen still on horseback attending for his coming. Ledington seemed willing till have passed by the Provost without any speech; but he pressed towards him, and asked him if the queen's majesty had perused the letter, and what service it would please her majesty to command him back again.

"He answered that as yet the queen was sleeping, and therefore had not delivered the letters, and thought that there would not be any meet time for it till after the assize, wherefore he willed him to attend; so giving place to the [throng] of people that passed, which was great, and by the estimation of men of good judgment above 4000 gentlemen besides others. The Earl Bodwell passed with a merry and lusty cheer, attended on with all the soldiers, being 200, all harkebuzers, to the Tolbooth, and there kept the door, that none might enter but such as were more for the behoof of the one side than the other. The assize began between x and xi, and ended vii in the afternoon.

"The Earl of Argyle and Huntly [were] chief judges. What particularly was done or said there, I cannot yet learn, more than that there were two advocates called Crawford and Cunningham, for the Earl of Lennox, who accused the Earl Bodwell for the murder of the king, alleging certain documents for the same, and desiring forty days' term longer, for the more perfect and readier collection of his proofs."

There is another original letter of Drury's written about this time, which is a fragment, and without the date of month or day. It consists of disjointed pieces of news sent from Scotland by some one of those many spies from whom Drury received information. "The guard," says he, "of the soldiers of Bodwell, he going to be tried by the assize, and their keeping of the door, is much disliked of." "Bothwell, immediately after the trial, set up a cartel of defiance; he would fight

any one (except a defamed person) who accused him of the king's death. If I thought it might stand with the queen my sovereign her favour, I would answer it and commit the sequel to God. I have for me sufficient to charge him with, and would prove it upon his body, as willingly as I would receive the obtaining of my suit, required of the queen's majesty. I have here caused the draught of a letter to her majesty, humbly craving your honour's judgment of it. The marriage of the queen to Bodwell, and the death of the prince, is presently looked for. I send you here inclosed the ploughman's bill, if your honour shall think it good to shew it to her majesty. There is another worse, which I am promised.

"The cardinal did send a very gentle letter to the Lord of Moray by Clarenoch, also credit by mouth, craving pardon for the past, for that he had borne him evil will; but now, finding that though his religion were contrary to his, yet his honest, honourable doings, and the care that he was now surely persuaded he hath tofore had of this queen here, and his sound dealing with her, ever moved him now to think himself behoden unto him. Monsieur de Croc seems much to mislike the earl's departure, and says so to the queen. She answered, he went away for debt; but she wept at his departure, wishing he were not so precise in religion. She wished him to go to Flanders, and to visit neither England nor France.

"It was Captain Cullen's persuasion, for more surely, to have the king strangled, and not only to trust to the train of powder, affirming he had known many so saved. Sir Andro Carr, with others, was on horseback near unto the place, for aid to the cruel enterprise if need had been. The Lady Coldingham, now wife to the young Mr of Caithness, and sister to the Earl Bodwell, is in credit, and in the place of the Lady Renes, now out of court. Suspicion banished the one and placed the other. I dare not say as others that knows more says.

"Great means was used to have had the Earl of Moray staid in the town till the cruel deed had been done. The Bishop of Glasco, Ambassador for Scotland in France, hath written to the queen, and to others which the queen hath understanding of, that nothing likes her, of the death of the king. . . . The king was long of dying, and

to his strength made debate for his life. The Lord David, son to the duke, is mad, and Arbroath, his brother, hath already had a show of the same disease.

. . . There accompanied the Earl of Moray to the boundary his brother the Lord of Holyrood House, the Lord Hume, and the chief of the gentlemen of the March, and some of Lothian, as Brymstone and others. The king would often read and sing the 55th Psalm, and went over it a few hours before his death. There were not many that he would of his griefs deal with, but to some he would say he should be slain, and complain him much of his being hardly dealt with. Even now by the under-marshall I received this more. His own evil handling. He only kept out of the court pushed out as it were by force, thrust upon the breast with extremity, in the sight of divers gentlemen, which seemed much to mislike therewith.

"A bill set up, 'Farewell, gentyll Henry, but a vengeance of Mary.' The queen sent a token and message to Bodwell being at the assize.¹ The queen, upon Thursday last, past through the street unto the market, where there were women sitting that had to sell. They rysse as she came near, crying aloud, 'God save your grace, if you be saikless of the king's deade [of the king's death.]' The queen's advocates, that should have inveighed against Bodwell, are much condemned for their silence. The like at an assize hath not been used. . . . Bodwell rode upon the courser that was the king's when he rode to the assize. The nobility long tarried his coming a horseback to accompany him. There was that followed him above iiiii thousand, whereof the greatest part were gentlemen, besides they that were [in] the streets, which were more in number. The streets were full from the Canon-gate to the castle.

"Ledington and others told the under-marshall that the queen was asleep, when he himself saw her looking out at a window, shewed him by one of La Croke's servants, a Frenchman, and Ledington's wife with her; and Bodwell, after he was a horseback, looked up, and she gave him a friendly nod for a farewell; for till it was known the under-marshall's errand as the contents of the letter, he had liberty in

¹ By Drury to Cecil, Border Correspondence, 24th April 1567.

court; but, not after, when he was once out, suffered to go in again."

No. XX., page 252.

Mary's Marriage with Bothwell.

It is remarked in the text, p. 252, that the queen, although making a show of contentment, was really wretched. The following letter of De Croc, the French ambassador, was written three days after her marriage with Bothwell, but recounts an interview which the ambassador had with Mary on her marriage-day. It is taken from the MS. Collections of Prince Labanoff. The original is in the Bibliotheque Royale at Paris. Collection de Harlay, No. 218.

"*Depeche de Monsieur de Croc a Catherine de Medicis, du 18 Mai, 1567.*

"Madame,—Les lettres que j'escrivois à V. M. par le dit Evesque (de Dumblane) sont pour estre leues; Vous pouvez penser que je ne me fye a lui quoi que je vous escrivois. Vos Majestes ne sauraient mieux faire que de luy faire mauvaise chere, et trouvez bien mauvaise le mariage, car il est tres malheureux, et desja l'on n'est pas à s'en repenter. Ieudi, Sa majeste m'envoya querir, on je m'apperceus d'une estrange façon entre elle et son Mary, ce que elle me voulloit excuser, disant que si je la voyois triste, c'estoit pour ce qu'elle ne vouloit se rejouyr comme elle dit ne le faire jamais, ne desirant que la mort.¹

"Hier estant renfermez tous deux dedans un cabinet avec le Compte de Bodwell, elle crio tout hault, que on luy baillast ung couteau pour se tuer. Ceulx qui estoient dedans la chambre, dans la piece qui precedoit le Cabinet, l'entendirent. Ils pensent que si Dieu luy aide qu'elle se desespera. Je l'ay conseillé et confortée de mieux que j'ay Peu ces trois fois que je l'ay veu.

"Son Mary ne la fera pas longue, car il est trop hay en ce royaume et puis l'on ne cessera jamais que la mort de Roy ne soyte seue. Il n'ya ici pas un seul Seigneur de Nom, que le dit Compte de Bodwell et le Compte de Craffort; les autres sont mandés, et ne veullent point venir.

"Elle a envoyé qu'ils s'assemblent en quelque lieu nommè, et je les aille

¹ This conversation, it is to be particularly noted, occurred on the very day of Mary's marriage to Bothwell—the 15th of May.

trouver pour leur parler au nom du Roy, et voir si je y pourrez faire quelque chose. Sil advient j'y ferez tout ce qu'il me sera possible, et apres, le meilleur est de me retirer, et comme je vous ayt mander, les laisser jouer leur jeu. Il n'est point séant que je y sois au nom du Roy; Car si je favorise la Royne l'on pensera en ce Royaume, et en Angleterre, que le Roy tient la main à tout ce qui se fait, et si ce n'eust esté le commandement que V. M. me feurent, je fust party huict jours devant les noces. Si est ce que j'ay parlez bien hault, dequoy tout ce royaume est assez abberuvez,² et je ne me suis point voullu brasser³ a ses noces; ni depuis ne l'ay point voullu reconnoistre comme Mary de la Royne. Je croiz qu'il escrira à V. M. par le dit Evesque de Dumblane; Vous ne luy debvez point faire de responce," &c. &c.

No. XXI., page 285.

Mary's Escape from Lochleven.

The following minute account of the queen's escape from Lochleven, which is my authority for the new and interesting circumstances given in the text, was communicated by John Beaton, brother of the Archbishop of Glasgow, to the King of France, and transmitted by Petrucci, the envoy or ambassador of the Grand Duke, Cosmo de Medicis, to his master, in a letter dated at Paris, 21st of May 1568. It is taken from the MS. Collections of Prince Labanoff, who found the original in the secret archives of the House of Medici. Beaton, it will be observed, was on the spot watching at Kinross for the queen on the evening she made her escape. He was a principal contriver of the escape, and an eye-witness and ear-witness of all.

MODO CHE LA REGINA DI SCOTIA HA USATO PER LIBERARSI DALLA PRIGIONE.

Advisato detta Regina di Scotia Monsignor di Seton suo confidentissimo Cattolico et molto valoroso cavaliere, per via d'un putto di casa, il quale non ritorno poi, egli si condusse per il giorno determinato con circa 50 cavalli, presso al Lago di Loclevin, dove la Regina era tenuta prigioniera, restando pero egli con 40 di loro, fra certe montagne poco lontano per non essere

² Instruit.

³ Participer.

scoperti da quelli del Castello del lago, e piu presso si fecero gli altri dieci, che smontarono in un vilaggio vicino al lago, mostrando esservi per transito, uno de quali ando in ripa al lago prossimo, et stava col corpo disteso in terra per non esser veduto, aspettando, che la Regina uscisse, secondo l'ordine.

"Alla porta del Castello, si facevano le guardie continuati, giorno e notte, eccetto che mentre ci cenava, nel qual tempo, si chiudeva la Porta con una chiave, andando ognuno a cena, e la chiave stava sempre sulla tavola, dove il Castellano mangiava, e davanti a lui. Il Castellano è fratello uterino del Conte de Murray Regente de Scozia, fratello naturale della Regina, e suo mortal nimico.

"La Regina doppo provato di calarsi da una finestra, e non li era riuscito, fece tanto che un paggio del Castellano, il quale essa haver a cio disposto, portando la seconda sera di Maggio un piatto in tavola, con una servietta innanzi al padrone, le misse sopra la chiave, e quella tolse e porto via—che alcuno non s'en'accorse, andato subito dalla Regina le disse il tutto, e ella che tra tanto s'era messe le vesti della maggior di quelle due cameriere, che le havevano lassate, menando seco per mano la minore, che puo essere una figlia di 10 anni, n'ando col paggio chetamente alla porta et aperta se n'uscì con lui, e con la putta, e serrata la per di fuori con la medesima chiave, senza laquale non si poteva aprire, ne anco di dentro, entra in un piccol batello, che quivi si teneva per servizio del Castello, e spiegato un suo velo bianco, con un fiocco rosso, fe il segno concertato, a chi l'attendeva che ella veniva, al quale segno quello che era disteso in terra su la ripa del lago, levato si, e con un altro segno advisati li Cavaliere del Vilaggio, (fra quali era principale, quello che e venuto qua a dar conto di questo fatto a questi Maesta, che e fratello del Ambasciatore di Scotia qua,) e da loro advisati poi quelli della Montagna furono subito al lago, e la Regina che col paggio remando al meglio che poteva, di la con la Dio gratia s' era condotta; racolsero con infinita allegrezza e messa la a cavallo, col paggio e con la putta, la menarono al Mare 5 miglia indi discosto, per cio che l'andare sempre per terra, dove havevano disegnato saria stato loro di manifesto pericoloso.

"Imbarcatisi tutti la condussero a

Nidri luogo ti Monsignore di Seiton e di la poi a Amilton, Castello del Duca di Sciatelero, la dove Monsignore d'Arcivescovo di Santa Andrea suo fratello, con altri principali de quella parte l'accolsero e rivereron come Regina. Amilton e luogo forte per battaglia di mano e vicino a Don Bertran porto e Castello fortissimo 4 leghe, ma la Regina non si retira la' si perche e ben sicura in Amilton, comandando a tutta quella contrada, Monsignor S'Andrea sudetto, e non altri, si per poter receiver meglio quei che anderano ad-adjutarla la, che in una fortezza forse non saria cosi, alla quale pero in ogni caso si puo condurre da una sera, a un'altra accadendo.

"Tutto quel regno e in moto, chi per la Regina, chi contro di lei col Conte di Moray—Ella ha mandato questo Gentilhuomo¹ a domandar per hora mille archebusieri a queste Maesta, ma che se vorra ricuperare, Edinburg, citta principale, e l'altra fortezze occupate da ribelli, hara bisogno d'esser adjutata da ogni banda, he ha scritta una lettera al Cardinale di Loreno che moveria ogni cuore duro a compassione di lei, et le prime linee sono che ella domanda perdona a Dio et al Mondo di gli errori passati della sua giovinezza, che ricognosci la sua liberazione solo da sua divina Maesta, e che le ne rendeva, humiliissime gracie, che le habbia dato tanto spirto in queste sue afflictioni, che non si sia mai punto mossa dal suo fermo proponimento di voler vivere e morir Cattolica, come intende hora de voler far piu che mai."

Collated and signed by L'Archivista,
G. Tanfani.

*Dal Archivio Mediceo, le 17 Febbrajo
1840.*

In a letter, preserved amongst the Morton MSS., from Sir William Kirkaldy to the Laird of Lochleven, dated June 1, 1568, there is the following passage:—

"Seeing that all thir three talk n effect, this last was tane in hand and executed, devised by the queen's self, George, and the lad Willie, and Curseil was on the counsel, who received all writings, messages, and tokenes from Willie sent by George to the queen. I can try no more of your servants to have been on this counsel. . . . As to them that came in company with the L. Seton, I need not tell you their names; but James Wardlaw was the

¹ Namely, John Beaton.

guide, and laid them quietly in the hill, where they might see the going in and out of the boat. When I know farther, ye shall understand it," &c.
1st June 1568.

NO. XXII., page 286.

Battle of Langside.

The following account of this battle is taken from an original in the State-paper Office, entitled,—

"ADVERTISEMENTS OF THE CONFLICT IN
SCOTLAND."

[The blanks are left in consequence of the original being in those places injured.]

"16th May 1568.

"The queen's number was six thousand.

"The Earl of Argyle her Lieutenant-General.

"The company of the Lords was esteemed to be four thousand.

"The Hamiltons had the vauntgarde of the queen's part, assisted with others, to the number of two thousand. Both companies did strive for a hill nigh adjoining where they met. Their meeting together was in a strait passage through a village. The Lord Hume, the Lord Semple, and the Lord Morton, had the vauntgarde on that side. The fight endured, at the least, three quarters of an hour without giving back. The queen's party first gave way, and then pursued¹ . . . at the beginning of which chase Th' Earl of Moray willed and required all his to spare for shedding of more blood. Otherwise as many as were on foot, which were the greatest number, had been in their enemy's will, for the h . . . whereof the Lord Harris was general, fled and . . . within the horses of them that were lighted of the company.

"The queen beheld this conflict within half a mile distant, standing upon a hill, accompanied with Lord Boyd, the Lord Fleming, and the Lord Harris' son, with thirty others, who, seeing the company overthrown, took the way to² [Dumbarton, who was so near pursued that she could not take the boat that should bring her into Dumbarton, but was driven to take the way to Dumfries, where she as yet remaineth.] The estimation of the number that was slain in the place

¹ Sic in original.

² The passage enclosed with [] is scored through in the original.

where they fought, by the view of them that have skill, is judged to be six or seven score, besides those have died since being brought into the town and other places, which daily die. And taken prisoners of that side to the number of 300 and more, whereof the Lord Seton, the Lord Ross, Sir James Hamilton, the Mr Montgomery, the Mr Cassillis, the Sheriff of Ayr, the Sheriff of Lithgow, who bore the Hamilton's standard in the vanguard, himself being a Hamilton, the young Laird of Preston, the Laird of Innerwick, the Laird of Pitmilly, and the Laird of Bawieirg, Andro Melvin, the Laird of Boyne, and Robert Melvin, Captain Anstruther, the Laird of Trabrowne, two sons to the Bishop of St Andrews, if one of them not slain, a son to the Abbot of Kylwinnon. The rest of the number that is taken of the three hundred is all of the surname of the Hamiltons and their allya. Alexr. Stewart a captain of footmen slain.

"John Hamilton of Millbourne, Mr of the household to the Duke, also slain. John Hamilton of Ormiston slain.

"The prisoners for the most part are all put in the castle of Glasgow. Of the Lords' side never a man of name slain. Divers sore hurt. The Lord Hume hurt in the leg and face, and overthrown, and relieved by his own men. The Lord Ochiltree sore hurt, and in danger of his life, at the skirmish on horseback in the morning, receiving his chief wound with a sword in his neck, given by the Lord Harris, whose son, in the revenge of his father's hurt, had slain the Lord Seton, had not the Earl of Moray saved him, after his being yielded. Andro Kar of Fawdonside likewise hurt in danger of his life, with divers other gentlemen sore hurt.

"The Earl of Argyle, even as they were joining, as it is reported, for fault of courage and spirit, swooned. There were divers of the queen's part taken, and not brought in, for there was the father against the son, and brother against brother, as namely, three of the Melvyns of the Lords' side, and two of the queen's, which was Robert and Andro. After the fight had long continued, a gentleman of the Highland, called Macfarlane, who not xx days before for his misbehaviour was condemned to die, and yet, at the suit of the Countess of Moray, had his pardon, and now accompanied with twe hund-

dred of his countrymen was a wing to the vauntgarde of th' east side, and came in and executed great slaughter, by whom the victory was not thought least to be atchieved.

"The Earl of Huntly was coming to the queen with . . . with great speed, untill . . . got the warst, and then . . . of field pieces of brass there was x, which the Lords also wan. And the Mr. Gunner, with a great piece from the Lords' side.

"The day following, being the 14th, the earl sent to summon the castle of Hamilton. The answer respaited till the next morning, and he that had the charge thereof came to Glasgow, and offered the keys to the Earl of Moray upon his knees, and said, that if it pleased to send any thither to receive it, he should; and he answered that he would go himself, and so did, and took it that day himself about 12 hours; and within few hours afterwards went to Draffen, but how he hath therein prevailed I yet know not, but shall at the return of those two that I have yet remaining there.

"The Earl of Athole, notwithstanding his promise made to the Lords, neither he nor any of his came. The Laird of Grange had the charge of the horsemen of the Lords' side, who that day played his part. The French ambassador was either at Hamilton or in the field the day of their meeting. The Earl of Eglinton, being of the queen's side, bestowed himself in a house, and there covered with straw till the night, and then escaped.

"The noblemen that were with the queen : the Earl of Argyle, th' Earl of Eglinton, the Earl of Cassillis's brother, with his friends. The Earl of Rothes, the Lord Boyd, the Lord Fleming, the L. Levyston, the Lord Seton, the Lord Ross, the Lord Yester, the Lord Borthwick, the Lord Claud, son to the Duke, Sir James Hamilton, . . . the Sheriff of Lithgow, the L. . . . and of Garleys, the L. Weemys of Fife, with all the whole force of Galloway and Liddesdale.

"That day the Earl of Moray went to receive the castle of Hamilton; certain of his horsemen ran a foray, and got many naggs, whereupon the poor people made a great lamentation, and immediately thereupon he caused proclamation to be made that their goods should be delivered again. and no spoil to be made."

No. XXIII., page 315.

An Order for Mary's Execution in 1569.

The following is the letter of Leicester, referred to in the text. It was politely communicated to me by John Bruce, Esq., a well-known and able antiquary, and secretary to the Camden Society. He conjectures that it was written to Secretary Walsingham, but the address does not appear on the letter. It is preserved in a MS. volume belonging to Frederick Ouvry, Esq., by whose permission it is now printed. The volume was written, as Mr Bruce conjectures, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, and contains transcripts of many letters written by Leicester, from the Low Countries. I have in vain searched for the original of this letter in the State-paper Office. The fact which it mentions, that a great seal was sent for Mary's execution of a sudden, at the time of Northumberland and Westmoreland's rebellion, is, as far as I know, new.

LEICESTER TO ——.

10th October 1585.

"I have written very earnestly, both to her majesty and my Lord Treasurer, and partly also to yourself and Mr Vice-Chamberlain, for the furtherance of justice in [on] the Queen of Scots; and believe me if you shall defer it, either for a parliament or a great session, you will hazard her majesty more than ever; for time to be given is that the traitors and enemies to her will desire.

"Remember, how upon a less cause, how effectually all the council of England once dealt with her majesty *for justice to be done upon that person*, for being suspected and infamed to be consenting with Northumberland and Westmoreland in the rebellion. You know the Great Seal of England was sent then, and thought just and meet, upon the sudden, for her execution.) Shall now her consent and practice for the destruction of her majesty's person be used with more [regard] to her danger than the less found fault? Surely I tremble at it; for I do assure myself of a new more desperate attempt if you shall fall to such temporising solemnities; and her majesty cannot but mislike you all for it; for who can warrant these villains from her if that person live, or shall live any time? God forbid; and

be you all stout and resolute in this speedy execution, or be condemned of all the world for ever. It is most certain, if you will have her majesty safe, it must be done; for justice doth crave it, besides policy. It is the cause I send this poor lame man, who will needs be the messenger for this matter; he hath bidden such pain and travel here, as you will not believe. A faithful creature he is to her majesty as ever lived. I pray you let her not¹ retain him still now, even to save his life, for you know the time of the year is past for such a man to be in the field; yet will he needs be so, and means to return, and you must procure his stay as without my knowledge, or else I lose him for ever; but if he come hither, it is not like if he can continue; he deserves as much as any good heart can do—be his good friend, I pray you, and so God bless you—Hast—written in my bed upon a cushion, this 10th, early in the morning.

“Your assured.

“I pray you let not Candish know I wrote for his stay, but yet procure it in any wise.”

No. XXIV., page 347.

Elizabeth's Plot for the Secret Execution of Mary in Scotland.

The following are the letters which contain the secret history of Killigrew's mission:—

HENRY KILLIGREW TO LORDS BURGHLEY AND LEICESTER.

“Leith, 14th September 1572.

“May it please your good lordships, I arrived at Berwick the 11th of this present; and after I had some conference with Mr Marshal touching my charge, I came to Tantallon, where the Earl Morton had lain sick ten days before. He caused me to stay there all night, by reason whereof many speeches passed, which now for haste I cannot enlarge; but, in sum, it may please your honour to know, that he assured me, that for his part he was the same man he always professed himself to be, both for the king his master's service, and the doing of all good offices to continue the amity with the queen's majesty, my sovereign; that he knew of

¹ Sic in original, but it seems incorrect. It should be, I think, “let her retain him still now”

no pensions offered by Monsieur de Croc, nor any practices for conveying the king, &c. La Croc he seemed not to like, because hitherto he did not acknowledge the king's authority; but a driver of time in this treaty, which I think will hardly be brought to a good peace without further trouble, for the great jealousy the one party hath that the other meaneth but drift of time. He¹ is the king's lieutenant-general on this side Stirling.

“The news of France doth make them and others startle, and here methinks doth greatly alienate their minds from that king. Where their day of meeting was appointed to be the 10th day of this month, certain of both sides convened together and put it off till the 20th of this month, at which time the regent, and the Earl of Morton, with the king's friends, do meet here in Leith. In this meanwhile, passing towards my Lord Regent to Stirling, I thought good, having met Mr James Melvin by chance in this town, to let them of the castle know of my coming, and of the cause, and of the charge I have to deliver them as soon as I shall have been with the regent. It seemeth I am not disliked of the other party, and therefore I hope some good will grow, even in the matter I am chiefly sent for, whereof, as soon as I may be able with reason, I shall advertise your honours; and in this meantime, most humbly beseech you to pardon this rude scribbling.

“John Knox is again in Edinburgh; the town guarded; and this also, which is somewhat fortified and in defence, with the king's soldiers. From Leith, this 14th of September, in the morning.²

“Your honours' most bounden,
“H. KILLIGREW.”

KILLIGREW TO LORDS BURGHLEY AND LEICESTER.

“19th October 1572, Stirling.

“May it please your good lordships to be advertised. I came hither the 16th of this present, at night, and the next day I was bidden to dinner with the regent, and saw the king, who seemed to me a very toward prince of his age, both in wit and person.

“I pressed my Lord Regent's grace to command some good and reasonable

¹ i.e., Morton.

² State-paper Office.

answers to be made unto the form of surety demanded by the Castilians, to the end that this abstinence be not neglected as the other was, without doing anything for the peace until it was too late; and in this motion I used some speeches to sound his inward liking and devotion to the peace indeed, which I found him to my judgment most desirous thereof: and weary, as it were, in respect of the burden, charge, and trouble, sustained by the regiment, because he findeth not the assistance he looked for, neither at home, nor yet from abroad.

" Touching my motion, his grace said, that he had given order to the Abbot of Dunfermline to deliver me, at my return to Edinburgh, such answer as his grace and the council had caused to be framed to the Castilian's demands, the which, he hoped, I should find to be reasonable; and in case there were anything to their misliking, his grace and the council were contented to be ruled therein by the advice of her majesty, wherein they nothing doubted the care her majesty had, both of the preservation of their young king and his estate. And by occasion of this speech his grace said moreover to me, how he had sent his resolute mind unto my Lord of Morton by the said abbot *touching the great matter*; wherein I found him now very earnest, insomuch that he desired me to write speedily unto both your honours to further the same by all the good means you might, as the best, and as it were, the only salve for the cure of the great sores of this commonwealth. I am also put in good hope of the said abbot that I shall receive a good answer of my Lord of Morton's touching the circumstances, et cetera, which I omit to write till the despatch of my courier, by whom I shall be able to satisfy your honours more at length, having only written thus much, as it were, by the way.

" I perceive the regent's first coldness grew rather for want of skill how to compass so great a matter, than for lack of good will to execute the same. He desired me also to write unto your honours to be suitors unto her majesty for some relief of money towards the payment of his soldiers, without the which he shall not be able to do his master that service he desireth."

The rest of the letter is unimportant.¹

KILLIGREW TO LORDS BURGHLEY AND LEICESTER.²

" November 23, 1572.

" My bounden duty most humbly remembered.

" Your honours' letters by Captain Arrington, who brought her majesty's pacquet, I received the 22d of this present, in the which your honours do earnestly charge me with two great, yea, very great faults—one that I should have passed my commission in the handling of the great cause, the other, for that I shewed myself willing to receive so absurd and unreasonable requests as I sent your honours.

" To the first I answer, with all humbleness, under the correction of your good lordships, that whatsoever cause my confounded manner of writing gave your honours so to think, yet if it shall be proved ever hereafter that I used her majesty's name therein, or passed the bounds of my commission, I will never desire more favour of your honours, but rather that ye would do justice upon me to the example of others.

" I forget not, my lords, the great charge her majesty gave me at my coming hither, saying, that no more was privy to this matter but your honours and I, and that if it came forth, the blame should fall thereafter. I could but promise her majesty it should be to me as my life, which I trust I have kept, insomuch that when I was advertised that my Lord Keeper, after his coming to the court, was also made acquainted with the matter, I durst never direct my letters to him, with your lordships, but thought best to leave the same to your wisdoms. And this is absolute to the first point, whatsoever my Cornish English hath occasioned your honours to gather to the contrary, that I never used her majesty's name, or that I would make any motion for them here, but to your honours alone.

" Now, touching the receiving of the Articles, and transcription of them, I did it not without protestation to the Abbot of Dunfermline, how I utterly disliked them, assuring him farther, that I took them not to any other end, but to know of my Lord of Morton, whether they were according to his meaning. Whereupon I remember the abbot replied, alleging certain causes why he thought her majesty would

¹ State-paper Office

² Original, State-paper Office.

never agree to any such thing, therefore that this was a mean to feel your lordships' judgments, which saying of his I did insert as near as I could remember them in the letter and after the 'Articles.'

"I humbly beseech your honours to consider that this was done at such time as the late regent lay a-dying, which matter and the sequel thereof did so occupy my head and hand, that I was fain to send those Articles with a confused letter, as it were rather to let your honours see the manner of their dealing, (whereof I had given warning before in my other letters,) than that I did allow or like of them ; and therefore I advertise your honours how I had told my Lord of Morton plainly, that I had not sent them, but only received them of the abbot, (who was gone over the water,) to know whether they were as his Lordship meant them—who, taking the copy which I had in my hand to shew him, after he had read them, said, that the abbot had missed in something, and desired me not to send the Articles. I answered, he need not desire me, for though he would give me never so much, I would not do it, and in the end made him see that it was rather a mockery than otherwise.

"This your honours may trust to is true, although the time were such then as I could not write all circumstances ; and since that time, although I heard some time a glance of the matter, I would never give great ear to it. . . . And truly, my Lords, I was stricken with such sorrow upon the reading of your letters, I was not able since to brook anything I took for sustenance.

"By your honours' bounden,
"H. KYLLYGREW."¹

No. XXV., page 352.

Death of Mar.

On the day the Regent Mar died at Stirling,—namely, October 28, 1572,—Killigrew the ambassador wrote this letter to the Lords Burghley and Leicester :—

" May it please your good Lordship, I wrote yesterday to Mr Secretary of the great danger my Lord Regent was in of his life, but since, he having been let blood, is somewhat amended. My Lord of Morton told me the same day that he had received a letter from Alex-

ander Areskine, the regent's brother, that there was no hope of life in him, and willed him to provide accordingly ; which he did, as your honours shall understand by Captain Arrington, who shall depart hence to-morrow at the farthest, both with their opinions here for the peace, as also for *the matter ye wot of*, which in mine opinion will nothing satisfy your expectation, unless it may be squared and framed to a better and more reasonable proportion, as I think it will upon your answers. I look this night for a man I sent to Stirling, and therefore shall peradventure stay a little the longer, that I may send you perfect word of the regent's estate. And thus referring all things to Capt. Arrington's letters, I most humbly take my leave of your honours.

" H. KYLLYGREW."²

No. XXVI., page 363.

Death of Grange.

REGENT MORTON TO KILLIGREW.

"Holyrood House, Aug. 5, 1573.

" After my most hearty commendations, I received your letter from Captain Cockburn as I returned from Stirling towards this town upon the 28th of July, wherein I find a loving continuance of your care and gude will towards the amity of thir³ countries, and friendship to myself. Of the quhilke⁴ I heartily thank you.

" Upon Monday the 3d of August, Grange, his brother Mr James, with Mossman and Cockky, the goldsmiths that made the counterfeit money in the castle, were executed, according to the judgment of the law pronounced against them : and further execution is not yet made. What offers were made on Grange's behalf for safety of his life, I send you herewith the copy, which, as you may consider are large, as meikle⁵ as possibly might have been offered. Yet, considering what has been, and daily is, spoken by the preachers, that God's plague will not cease quhill⁶ the land be purged of blood, and having regard that such as are interested by the death of their friends, the destruction of their houses, and away taking of their goods, could not be satisfied by any offer made to me in particular, quhilke I accepting, should have been cassin⁷ in double in-

² State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 28th October 1572.

³ These. ⁴ The which. ⁵ As much.
⁶ Until. ⁷ Thrown.

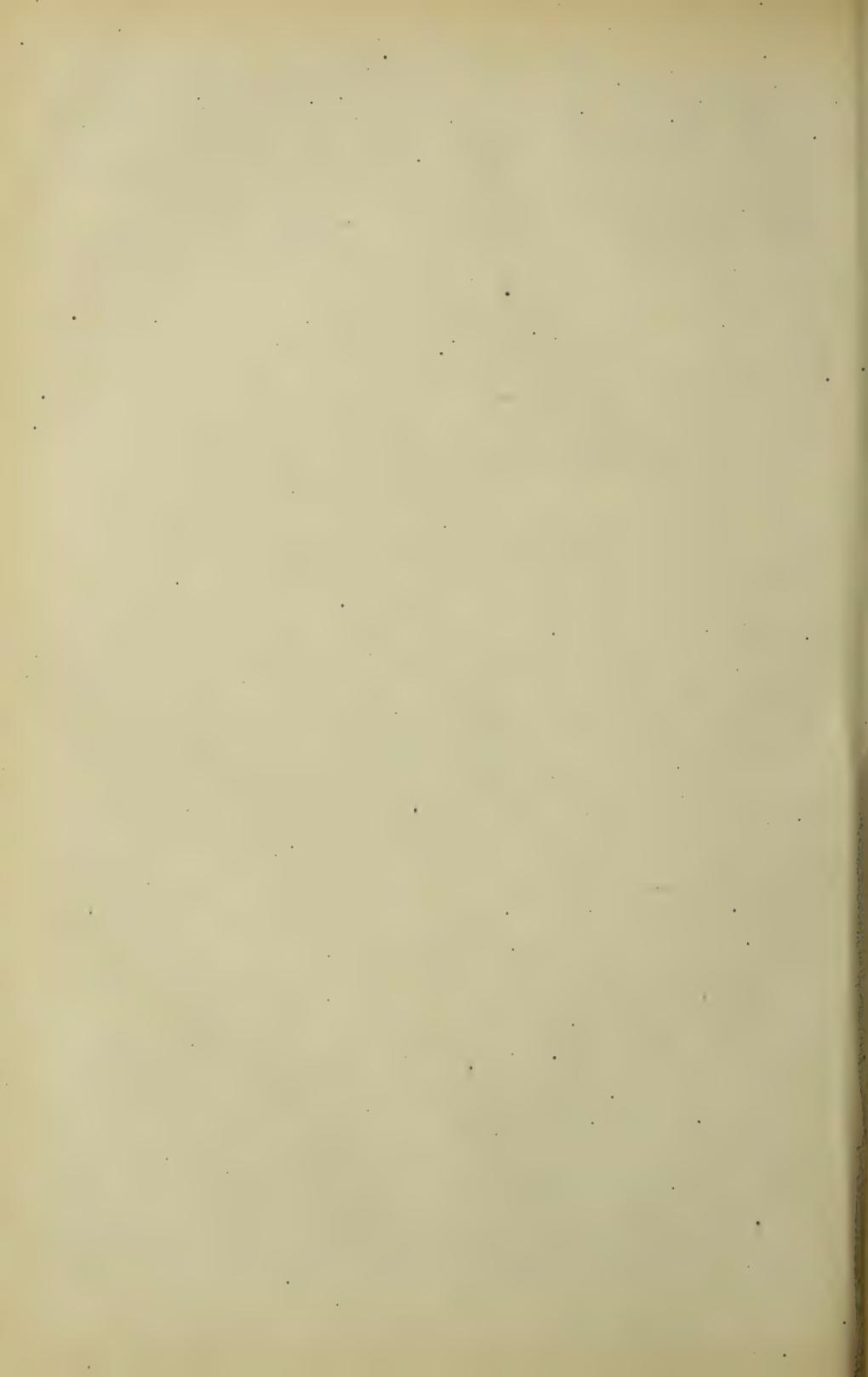
convenience, I deliberated to let justice proceed as it has done.

"I have written to my Lady Lennox, to crave of the Marshal of Berwick, the king my sovereign's jewels that are in his hands, which he is obliged in honour, and by indenture and promise made at the incoming of the queen's majesty's

forces, to deliver in my hands to the king's use. It may be that he will use them liberally now at court, and make friends by them. Therefore, I pray you give advice to my Lady Lennox in what order it is best that she handle this matter."¹

¹ State-paper Office.

END OF VOL. III.



THE

HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

FROM THE

ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER III. TO THE UNION.

BY

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER,

F.R.S.E. & F.A.S.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

CHAPTER I.

REGENCY OF MORTON.

1573—1580.

SCOTLAND was now at peace; and the regent, having nothing to fear from domestic enemies or foreign intrigue, addressed himself with great energy and success to reduce the country to order. The Border districts, at all times impatient under the restraints of a firm government, had, during the late civil commotions, become the scene of the utmost violence and confusion; but Morton, advancing from Peebles to Jedburgh with a force of four thousand men, soon compelled the principal chiefs to respect the law and give pledges for their obedience.¹ Sir James Hume of Coldingknowes was then appointed warden of the east, Lord Maxwell of the west, and Sir John Carmichael of the middle marches;² and the regent had leisure to renew his correspondence and confirm his ties with England.

Some time before this, when Killigrew, after his successful embassy, returned to the English court,³ Morton had sent a memorial to Elizabeth,⁴ in

which he pointed out the principles upon which he proposed to regulate his future government. He declared the grateful feelings entertained by himself and the people, for her late assistance in quieting their troubled country, and reducing it under the king's obedience.⁵ He urged the necessity of entering into a mutual league for the maintenance of the Protestant religion, and its professors, against the Council of Trent; and suggested the expediency of a contract or band for mutual defence from foreign invasion.⁶ In a letter written at the same time to Burghley, he pointed out the heavy charges which he had incurred, and requested pecuniary assistance, as it would still be necessary for him to provide against any renewed rebellion by keeping up a body of troops; and he, lastly, reminded Elizabeth that Mary, the root of all the evil, was still in her power, and at her disposal. "The ground of the trouble," said he, "remains in her majesty's hands and power; whereunto I doubt not her highness will put

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Lord Burghley, Kelso, August 30, 1573.

² Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 337. Spottiswood, p. 272.

³ June 29.

⁴ Copy, State-paper Office, Memoirs of me.

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the Lord Regent of Scotland, to the Queen's Majesty of England's Ambassador, &c., June 26, 1573.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

order when she thinks time, so as presently I will not be further curious thereanent, abiding the knowledge of her majesty's mind, how she shall think convenient to proceed in that behalf.”¹ It appears from this sentence, that the regent invited the English queen to renew the negotiations for putting Mary to death in Scotland, which were so suddenly broken off by the decease of Mar; and indeed, some time before the surrender of the castle of Edinburgh, Killigrew the ambassador wrote to Burghley, that he had given Morton a strong hint upon the subject. He stated, that in a conversation which took place in the palace, the regent had declared, that as long as the Scottish queen lived, there would be treason, troubles, and mischief: “to which,” said Killigrew, “I answered he might help that; and he said, when all was done, he thought at the next parliament . . . to prove the noblemen after this concord, to see what might be done.”² We do not find, however, that Elizabeth at this moment gave any encouragement to the renewal of this nefarious negotiation.

All was now quiet in Scotland; and it is remarkable that, notwithstanding the miseries of the civil war, the general prosperity of the country had been progressive. Commerce and trade had increased; and whilst the power of the high feudal lords was visibly on the decay, the middle classes had risen in importance; and the great body of the people, instructed in their political duties by the sermons of the clergy, and acquiring from the institution of parish schools a larger share of education and intelligence, began to appreciate their rights, and to feel their own strength. There is a passage in a letter of Killigrew, which is worthy of notice upon this subject. “Methinks,” said this acute observer, “I see the noblemen's great credit decay in this country, and the barons,

burrows, and suchlike take more upon them; the ministers and religion increase, and the desire in them to prevent the practices of the Papists; the number of able men for service very great, and well furnished both on horse and foot; their navy so augmented, as it is a thing almost incredible.”³ It is to be recollectcd that Killigrew's last visit to Scotland had been in 1567, immediately after the murder of the king; and that the remarkable change which he now noticed, had taken place in the brief period of five years.

This flourishing state of things, however, did not long continue; for although the regent was justly entitled to the praise of restoring security and order, and his vigour in the punishment of crime, and the maintenance of the authority of the laws, was superior to that of any former governor, there was one vice which stained his character, and led to measures of an unpopular and oppressive kind. This was avarice: and he found the first field for its exercise in an attack upon the patrimony of the Kirk. He had the address to persuade the Presbyterian clergy, that it would be the best thing for their interests to resign at once into his hands the thirds of the benefices, which had been granted for their support by a former parliament. Their collectors, he said, were often in arrear; but his object would be to make the stipend local, and payable in each parish where they served. This would be a better system; and if it failed, they should, upon application, be immediately reinstated in their right and possession.⁴ The plan was agreed to, but was followed by immediate repentance on the part of the clergy; as the moment Morton became possessed of the thirds, his scheme of spoliation was unmasked. The course he followed was, to appoint two, three, or even four churches to one minister, who was bound to preach in them by turns; and at the same

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Burghley, June 25, 1573.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Lord Burghley, Holyrood, June 26, 1573. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, March 4, 1572-3.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, Nov. 11, 1572.

⁴ Spottiswood, p. 273.

time he placed in every parish a reader, whose duty was to officiate in the minister's absence, and to whom a miserable pittance of twenty or forty pounds Scots was assigned. Having thus allotted to the Church the smallest possible sum, he seized the overplus for himself; and when the clergy, sensible of their error, petitioned to be reinstated in their property, as had been promised, they were at first met with delays, and at last peremptorily told, that the appointment of the stipends ought properly to belong to the regent and council.

Nothing could be more distressing and degrading to this independent body of men than such a state of things. Before this, when their stipend was defective, they had an appeal to the superintendents, who, if not always able, were at least solicitous to relieve them. Now, they were compelled to become suitors at court, where their importunate complaints met only with ridicule and neglect. All this misery was justly laid to the regent's account; and although once their favourite, as a steady friend to the Reformation, he became highly unpopular with the clergy.

But if the grasping avarice of Morton fell heavy on the ministers of the Kirk, their woes were little to the miseries of the lower classes, more especially the artisans, merchants, and burgesses of the capital. Many of these had remained in the city during the time of the late troubles. These were now treated as rebels, who had resisted the king's authority; and they found that they must either submit to a public trial, or purchase security by payment of a heavy fine. The sum thus collected was intended at first to be divided between the state and the citizens whose houses and property had been destroyed; but it followed the fate of all moneys paid into the coffers of this rapacious governor.

Another source of complaint arose out of those itinerant courts, denominated Justice-Ayres, and held in different parts of the kingdom; which, under his administration, became little else than parts of a system of legal

machinery, invented to overawe and plunder all classes in the country. To supply them with victims, he kept in pay a numerous body of informers, whose business it was to discover offences. Nor was it difficult to bring forward accusations of almost every possible nature, after so many years of a divided government, in which men, at one time or another, had been compelled to acknowledge very opposite authorities; now that of the king and his regent, now that of the queen or her partisans. Ample ground was thus found for every species of prosecution: against merchants for transporting coin out of the realm, against Protestants for transgressing the statute by eating flesh in Lent, against the poorer artisans or labourers for the mere remaining in a town or city which was occupied by the queen's forces. As to those whose only offence was to be rich, their case was the worst of all; for to have a full purse, and "thole"¹ a heavy fine to the regent, were become synonymous terms.

These were not Morton's only resources. His petitions to Elizabeth for support were importunate and incessant; nor did he fail to remind her, that as it was by her allowance and advice that he had entered upon the regency, so he confidently expected her aid, especially in money, and pensions bestowed upon his friends. Although universally reputed rich, he dwelt pathetically on his limited revenue compared with his vast outlay; and in the letter to Burghley, which preferred these requests, he at the same time earnestly recommended Elizabeth to keep a watchful eye upon France, as the noted Adam Gordon, who had already done so much mischief in the north, was now received at the French court, and had offered, if properly supported, to overthrow the king's government in Scotland.²

This news seems to have alarmed the English queen; for, not long after,

¹ "Thole," undergo.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent Morton to Burghley, Jan. 21, 1573-4, Had-dington.

she again despatched Killigrew into that country. Her avowed object was to learn the state of public feeling, and the disposition of the regent; "whether he was constant in his affection towards England; how his government was liked by the people; whether the Scottish queen had yet any party there; and, above all, to discover whether France was intriguing, as had been reported, to get possession of the young king." To the regent's proposal for a defensive and religious league, he was instructed to reply that she deemed such a measure at present unnecessary; although, in any emergency, he might look confidently to her support. As to his request for money, Killigrew was, as delicately as he could, to "waive" all discussion upon the subject.

Here, however, as in the former embassy, there was a mission within a mission; and the envoy's open instructions embraced not the whole, nor even the most material part of the object for which he was sent. He was enjoined by Burghley and Leicester (doubtless, as before, with Elizabeth's knowledge and advice) to renew the negotiation for the "great matter," the project for having Mary put to death in her own country, and by her own subjects. Unfortunately the written orders upon this point are now lost; but immediately upon his arrival in Edinburgh, the ambassador communicated to Walsingham his fears that they had suffered the time for the accomplishment of so desirable a result to go by.¹

On examining the state of the country, Killigrew became convinced that his sovereign and the English had lost popularity since his late residence in Scotland. The regent, although professing his usual devotion, appeared more distant and reserved. The queen's coldness on the subject of the proposed league, and her evasion of his requests for pensions, had produced no good effect; and some

¹ MS., State-paper Office, "Instructions given to Henry Killigrew, Esq., &c., May 22, 1574, signed by Walsingham." Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 8, 1574, Berwick.

piracies committed by English subjects upon Scottish merchantmen, had occasioned great popular discontent.

Not long after the ambassador's arrival, he repaired to Stirling, where he was introduced to the young king, who had very recently completed his eighth year; and, after the interview, he sent this interesting portrait of him to Walsingham:—"Since my last unto you," said he, "I have been at Stirling to visit the king in her majesty's name, and met by the way the Countess of Mar coming to Edinburgh, to whom I did her majesty's commendations.

"The king seemed to be very glad to hear from her majesty, and could use pretty speeches: as, how much he was bound unto her majesty, yea, more than to his own mother. And at my departure, he prayed me to thank her majesty for the good remembrance she had of him; and further desired me to make his hearty commendations unto her majesty. His grace is well grown, both in body and spirit, since I was last here. He speaketh the French tongue marvellous well; and that which seems strange to me, he was able, *extempore*, (which he did before me,) to read a chapter of the Bible out of Latin into French, and out of French after into English, so well as few men could have added anything to his translation. His schoolmasters, Mr George Buchanan and Mr Peter Young, rare men, caused me to appoint the king what chapter I would; and so did I, whereby I perceived it was not studied for. They also made his highness dance before me, which he likewise did with a very good grace; a prince sure of great hope, if God send him life."²

The English ambassador remained in Scotland for more than two months, during which time he had ample opportunities to make himself acquainted with the state of the country. He found the regent firm in his government, universally obeyed,

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 30, 1574.

somewhat more feared than loved; but bold, decisive, and clear-headed in the adoption and execution of such measures as he deemed necessary to establish quiet and good order in the realm.

The general prosperity of all classes of the people surprised him. He had, to use his own expression, left the country "in a consumption," distracted and impoverished by a long continuance of civil war.¹ He had expected, on his return, to meet with the same melancholy state of things; but to his astonishment, the nation, as he described it to Burghley and Walsingham, had recovered itself with a rapidity of which he found it difficult to assign the cause. Its commerce and manufactures were in a flourishing condition, the people seemed to have forgotten their miseries, the nobles were reconciled to each other, and universally acknowledged the king's authority. Although French intrigue was still busy, and the captive queen attempted to keep up a party, the uncommon vigilance of Morton detected and put down all her practices. Formerly, the people, broken, bankrupt, and dispirited, were glad to sue for the protection of England, and the nobles were eager in their offers to Elizabeth. Now, to use Killigrew's phrase, they were "lusty and independent;" they talked as those who would be sued to; their alliance, they said, had been courted by "great monarchies;" and they complained loudly of the attack and plunder of their merchantmen by the English pirates. On this subject the regent expressed himself keenly, and was greatly moved. He dwelt, too, on other causes of dissatisfaction. The rejection of the proposed league by Elizabeth; her silence as to sending him any aid, or granting any pensions; the delay in giving back the ordnance which had been taken by the English, and other lighter subjects of complaint, were all recapitulated; and it

was evident to Killigrew that there was an alteration in the relative position of the two countries, which he assured Walsingham would not be removed by mere words of compliment.²

The ambassador anxiously impressed upon Elizabeth and her ministers, that the Scots were no longer dependent upon England; and as to attempting to make any impression upon the regent in "the great matter,"³ which Leicester and Burghley were solicitous should be again secretly discussed, it seemed to him a vain idea at present. If Morton were to consent to put Mary to death on her delivery into his hands, it would only be, as he soon perceived, by the offer of a far higher bribe than Elizabeth was disposed to give; and by the settlement of large annuities on such of the nobles as were confidants to his cruel design. Killigrew was so assured of the backwardness of his royal mistress upon this point, and the determination of the regent not to move without such inducement, that he begged to be allowed to return. "I see no cause," said he to Walsingham, "why I should remain here any longer; . . . especially if you resolve not upon the league, nor upon pensions, which is the surest ground I do see to build 'the great matter' upon, without which small assurance can be made. I pray God we prove not herein like those who refused the three volumes of Sibylla's prophecies, with the price which afterwards they were glad to give for one that was lost; for sure I left the market here better cheap than now I find it."⁴

The Queen of England, however, was not to be so easily diverted from any object upon which she considered the safety of herself and her kingdom to depend, and she insisted that her

² MS. Letter, State paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 23, 1574. Ibid., same to same, June 24, 1574. Ibid., 18th June 1574.

³ The having Mary put to death in Scotland.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, July 12, 1574, Edinburgh. Ibid., June 23, 1574.

¹ This must allude to his last visit but one—i.e., in 1567; for in 1572 he described it as rapidly improving. Supra, p. 2

ambassador should remain and accompany the regent in his northern progress, upon which he was about to enter.¹ “I think it not convenient,” said Walsingham to him in a letter of the 18th July, “that you be recalled till such time as you have advertised how you find the regent affected touching ‘the great matter’ you had in commission to deal in; and therefore I think fit you accompany the regent till you be revoked.”²

In the meantime, Elizabeth held a secret conference with Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, and appears to have herself suggested a new scheme for getting rid of Mary. It is unfortunately involved in much obscurity, owing to the letter in which it is alluded to being written partly in cipher; but it was disapproved of by Walsingham, apparently on the ground that it would be dangerous to send the Scottish queen into Scotland without an absolute certainty that she should be put to death.³

The English queen was evidently distracted between the fear of two dangers,—one, the retaining Mary within her dominions, which experience had taught her was the cause of constant plots and practices; the other, the delivering her to the Scots, an expedient which, unless it were carried through in the way proposed by Burghley and Leicester in 1572,⁴—that is, under a positive agreement that

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 23, 1574.

² Ibid., draft, Walsingham to Killigrew, July 18, 1574.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Killigrew, Woodstock, July 30, 1574. Killigrew accordingly accompanied the regent in his northern progress, and, on their arrival at Aberdeen, held a secret consultation on the *great matter*; but, unfortunately, the letters in which we might have looked for a particular account of what took place have disappeared. All that we know with certainty is, that the ambassador returned soon after to the English court, (Aug. 16); and that in a brief memorandum of such things as the regent desired him to remember in his conferences with the Queen of England, is this slight note:—“What further is to be looked for in that which passed betwixt us at Aberdeen, touching the *matter of greatest moment*.”—MS. Memorandum, State-paper Office, August 16, 1574.

⁴ Supra, vol. iii. pp. 349, 351.

she should be put to death,—was, as they justly thought, full of peril. Morton, however, although he had shewn himself perfectly willing to receive Mary under this atrocious condition, continued firm in his resolution not to sell his services for mere words. He, too, insisted on certain terms; especially an advance in money, and pensions to his friends. But the queen deemed his demands exorbitant; and, as was not unfrequent with her when pressed by a difficulty from which she saw no immediate escape, she dismissed the subject from her mind, and unwisely took refuge in delay. In this manner “the great matter” for the present was allowed to sleep; and Mary owed her life to the parsimony of Elizabeth, and the avarice of the Scottish regent.⁵

Killigrew not long after left Scotland, and on parting with him, Morton assured Leicester, in a letter which this ambassador carried with him, “that no stranger had ever departed from that country with greater liking and contentment of the people.”⁶ He requested him at the same time, on his return to the English court, to communicate with the queen and council upon some subjects of import which required a speedy answer. These embraced the dangers to which the Protestant interest in Scotland was exposed from continental intrigue; but, to the regent’s mortification, many months elapsed before any answer was received. At last Walsingham, alarmed by the apathy of Elizabeth and the continued practices of her enemies, endeavoured, in a letter of free remonstrance, to rouse his mistress to a sense of her peril. He told her that he had recently received a despatch from the Scottish regent, and with it some intercepted papers of the Bishop of Ross, which required instant consideration. They would convince her, he trusted, how utterly hollow were the promises of France and Spain, and to what imminent danger

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Leicester, August 16, 1574, Aberdeen.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Leicester, August 16, 1574.

she was exposed from "unsound subjects at home." He besought her deeply to weigh the matter, and "set to" her hand for the protection of her realm; observed that, though the Cardinal of Lorraine were dead, he had left successors enough to execute his plots; and conjured her to use expedition, before the hidden sparks of treason, now smouldering within the realm, should break out into an unquenchable fire. "For the love of God, madam," said he, "let not the case of your diseased estate hang longer in deliberation. Diseased estates are no more cured by consultation without execution, than unsound bodies by mere conference with the physician; and you will perceive by his letters how much the regent is aggrieved."¹

For a moment these strong representations alarmed Elizabeth, and she talked of sending Killigrew or Randolph immediately into Scotland;² but her relations with France occasioned new delays. She had entered into an amicable correspondence with Catherine de Medicis; the Duke d'Alençon still warmly prosecuted his marriage suit; and although the English queen had not the slightest intentions of granting it, she, as usual, dallied and coquettled with the proposal. In the midst of all, Charles the Ninth died; the queen became engrossed with the speculations and uncertainties which follow a new succession; and Morton, irritated by neglect, was driven by resentment and necessity to cultivate the friendship of that party in Scotland which was devoted to France.

This alienation was soon detected by Walsingham, who wrote in alarm to Burghley, and on the succeeding day to Elizabeth, adjuring her, for the

love of God, to arrest the impending mischief, and secure the Scottish amity, which of all others stood them at that moment in greatest stead. Already, he said, the regent was conferring favours on the Hamiltons, who were entirely French; already he was plotting to get the young King of Scots out of the hands of his governor, Alexander Erskine: Henry the Third, the new King of France, was well known to be devoted to the house of Guise; and with such feelings, what was to be expected but that, the moment he had quieted the disturbances in his own realm, he would keenly embrace the cause of the Scottish queen?³

Elizabeth was at last roused, and gave orders for the despatch of Henry Killigrew into Scotland, accompanied by Mr Davison, afterwards the celebrated secretary, whom he was directed to leave as English resident at the Scottish court.⁴ But before the ambassador crossed the Border, an affray broke out, which threatened the most serious consequences, and arrested him at Berwick. At a warden court, held by Sir John Forster, warden of the middle marches, and Sir John Carmichael, keeper of Liddesdale, a dispute arose which led to high words between these two leaders; and their followers, taking fire, assaulted each other. The Scots at first were repulsed, but being joined by a body of their countrymen from Jedburgh, rallied, and attacked, and totally routed the English. Sir John Heron, keeper of Tynedale, was slain: whilst Sir John Forster, Sir Francis Russell, Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, Mr Ogle, Mr Fenwick, and about three hundred men, were made prisoners, and carried by the Earl of Angus to the regent at Dalkeith. Morton received them with much courtesy, dismissed the prisoners of inferior rank, and expressed, in a letter to Elizabeth, his readiness to

¹ MS. Letter, draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, January 15, 1574-5.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edward Cary to Walsingham, January 17, 1574-5. Also original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to the Queen, March 20, 1574-5. In the midst of these anticipated troubles, died, at his palace of Hamilton, the Duke of Chastelherault, better known by the name of the Regent Arran, on the 22d January 1574-5.

³ MS. Letter, original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, April 11, 1575. Also State-paper Office, original draft, Walsingham to Elizabeth, April 12, 1575.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, original, instructions to Henry Killigrew, May 27, 1575.

afford redress: but he detained the lord warden; and when the queen insisted that the regent should meet Lord Huntingdon, the president of the north, in a personal conference in England, he peremptorily refused. Such a proceeding, he said, was beneath the dignity of the office he held; but he offered to send the justice-clerk to arrange a meeting in Scotland.¹

On being informed of this, Elizabeth, already chafed by the detention of her warden, broke into one of those furious fits of passion which sometimes caused her highest councillors to tremble for their heads, and disagreeably reminded them of her father. In this frame she dictated a violent message to the Scottish regent, which she commanded Killigrew to deliver without reserve or delay. She had seen, she said, certain demands made, on his part, by the justice-clerk, and did not a little wonder at so strange and insolent a manner of dealing. He had already been guilty of a foul fact in detaining her warden, the governor of one of the principal forts in her realm: he had committed a flagrant breach of treaty; and had she been inclined to prosecute her just revenge, he should soon have learnt what it was for one of his base calling to offend one of her quality. And whereas, continued she, he goeth about to excuse the detaining of our warden, alleging that he feared he might revenge himself when his blood was roused for his kinsman's death,—such an excuse seemed to her, she must tell him, a scornful aggravation of his fault; for she would have him to know, that neither Forster nor any other public officer or private subject of hers dared to offer such an outrage to her government, as, for private revenge, to break a public treaty. As to the conference with Huntingdon, instead of receiving her offer with gratitude, he had treated it with contempt. He had taken upon him to propose a place of meeting, four miles within Scotland; an ambitious part

¹ MS. Relation of the Affairs of Scotland from 1566 to 1579. Warrender MS. Collections, vol. B. fol. 208.

in him, and savouring so much of an insolent desire of sovereignty, that she would have scorned such a request had it come from the king his master, or the greatest prince in Europe. To conclude, she informed him that, if he chose to confer with the Earl of Huntingdon at the *Bond Rode*,² she was content; and he would do well to remember that his predecessor, the Regent Moray, had not scrupled to come to York, and afterwards to London, to hold a consultation with her commissioners.³

This passionate invective I have given, as it is highly characteristic of the queen; but Huntingdon and Killigrew deemed it proper to soften its expressions, in conveying the substance of it to the regent, whom they had no mind unnecessarily to irritate.⁴ Even in its diluted state, however, it awed him into submission. He met the English president on the 16th of August at the appointed place, arranged all differences, and not only dismissed his prisoners, but loaded them with presents, and sent Carmichael up to England to ask pardon of Elizabeth. Amongst his gifts were some choice falcons; upon which a saying rose amongst the Borderers, alluding to the death of Sir John Heron, that for this once the regent had lost by his bargain “He had given live hawks for dead Herons.”⁵

The quarrel having been adjusted, Killigrew proceeded to Scotland. On his arrival there, he perceived everywhere indications of the same flourishing condition in which he had lately left the country. Whilst the people seemed earnestly disposed to preserve the amity with England, all lamented

² The *Bond Rode*, or boundary road, a place or road on the marches near Berwick, common to both kingdoms.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, to Killigrew in Scotland. From the Queen.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Leicester, August 14, 1575.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Huntingdon to Leicester, August 14, 1575. Ibid., MS. Letter, Huntingdon to Sir T. Smith, August 17, 1575. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Walsingham, Sept. 20, 1575; and Hume of Godscroft, vol. ii. p. 253.

the late accident on the Borders; and the ministers in their sermons prayed fervently for the continuance of the peace. As to the regent himself, the ambassador found him still firm in his affection to England, and in resisting the advances of France. Although not popular, generally, the vigour and success of his government were admitted even by his enemies: property and person were secure, except from the rapacity of the regent himself, and he gave an example of confidence in his own conduct; for he never used a guard, and would pursue his diversions, walking abroad with his fishing-rod over his shoulder, or his hawk on his wrist,¹ almost alone, to the wonder of many. The Borders, since the late disturbance, had been quiet; and so rapidly had the foreign commerce of the country increased, that Killigrew reckoned it able to raise twenty thousand mariners.²

Such was the favourable side of the picture; but there were some drawbacks to this prosperity, arising chiefly out of the feuds amongst the nobility, and the discontent of the clergy. It was reported that Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, who had shot the Regent Moray, and fled to the continent after the murder, was to be brought home by the Lord of Arbroath. Arbroath was second son of the late Duke of Chastelherault, and, owing to the insanity of Arran, his elder brother, had become the chief leader of the Hamiltons. The idea of the return of the late regent's murderer, roused his friends to the highest pitch of resentment; and Douglas of Lochleven, Moray's near kinsman, assembling a force of twelve hundred men, vowed deadly vengeance against both the assassin and Arbroath his chief. The Earls of Argyle, Athole, Buchan, and Mar, with Lords Lindsay and Ruthven, espoused the quarrel of Lochleven: Arbroath, on the other hand, would be supported, it was said, by all the friends of France and the queen;

¹ Murdin, p. 283.

² This is the number stated in Killigrew's paper; but he must have made a highly erroneous and exaggerated calculation. Murdin, p. 285.

whilst Morton in vain endeavoured to bring both parties to respect the laws. Arbroath, too, meditated a marriage with the Lady Buccleuch, sister to the Earl of Angus, the regent's nephew and heir; and when Morton appeared to countenance the match, a clamour arose amongst the young king's friends, that he shewed an utter disregard to the safety of his sovereign. Was not the duke, they said, failing the king, the next heir to the throne? was not Arran, that nobleman's eldest son, mad? and did not the right of the royal succession devolve on Arbroath? Had the regent forgotten the ambition of the house of Hamilton, and Arbroath's familiarity with blood? and would he strengthen the hands of such a man by a marriage in his own family? If so, he need not look for the support of any faithful subject who tendered the young king's preservation.³

To these were added other causes of disquiet and difficulty. Morton was no longer popular with the citizens of Edinburgh; nor, indeed, could he reckon upon the support of any of the middle or lower classes in the state. His exactions had completely disgusted the merchants of the capital. He had imprisoned the most opulent amongst them; and this caused so great an outcry, that many scrupled not to say that, if he did not speedily change his measures, the same burghers' hands which had put him up would as surely pull him down again. To all these causes of discontent, must be added his quarrel with the Kirk, and the soreness arising out of his recent establishment of Episcopacy. This had given mortal offence to some of the leading ministers, who considered the appointment of bishops, abbots, and other Roman Catholic dignitaries, to be an unchristian and heterodox practice, utterly at variance with the great principles of their Reformation. They arraigned, and with justice as far as regarded the regent, the selfish and venal feelings which had led to the preservation of this alleged relic of Popery. It was evident, they said, that avarice, and not religion, was at

³ Murdin, pp. 282, 283.

the root of the whole. The nobles and the laity had already seized a large portion of the Church lands, and their greedy eyes still coveted more. These prizes they were determined to retain; whilst the poor ministers who laboured in the vineyard, and to whom the thirds of the benefices had been assigned, found this a nominal provision, and were unable, with their utmost efforts, to extract a pittance from the collectors; the whole of the rents finding their way into the purses of the regent and his favourites. And how utterly ridiculous was this last settlement of the bishops? Was it not notorious, that the see attached to the primacy of St Andrews belonged, in reality, to Morton himself? that there was a secret agreement, a nefarious collusion, between him and the prelate, his own near relative, whom he had placed in it? Was it not easy to see that the chief purpose of this ecclesiastical office was to enable the regent more readily and decently to suck out the riches of the benefice, as, in the north country, farmers would sometimes stuff a calf's skin, called there a *tulchan*, and set it up before a cow to make her give her milk more willingly? What were all these bishops, and abbots, and priors, whom they now heard so much about, but mere *tulchans*,—men of straw, clerical calves,—set up by the nobility to facilitate their own simoniacal operations?

These arguments, which were enforced with much popular eloquence and humour by those ministers who were attached to the Presbyterian form of church government, produced a great effect upon the people, already sufficiently disgusted by the exactions and tyranny of the regent. Morton, too, increased the discontent by his violence, threatening the most zealous of the ministers, and broadly declaring his conviction that there would be no peace or order in the country till some of them were hanged.¹

At this crisis, Andrew Melvil, a Scottish scholar of good family, who

had been educated first in his native country, and afterwards brought up in the strictest principles of Calvin and Beza at Geneva, returned to Scotland from the continent. He was profoundly skilled in the Greek and Latin languages, and calculated, both by his learning and enthusiasm, to be of essential service to the reviving literature of his country; but he was rash and imperious, a keen republican, sarcastic and severe in his judgment of others, and with little command of temper. Soon after his arrival he acquired a great influence over Durie, one of the leading ministers of the Kirk, who, at his instigation, began to agitate the question, whether the office of a bishop was consistent with the true principles of church government, as they could be gathered from the Word of God? After various arguments and consultations held upon the subject, a form of church polity was drawn up by some of the leading ministers; and the regent, with greater indulgence than his former proceedings had promised, appointed some members of the council to take it into consideration; but they had scarcely met, when the state was suddenly plunged into new troubles, which at once broke off their conference.

This revolution originated in a coalition of the Earls of Athole and Argyle against the regent. Both these noblemen were of great power and possessions, and could command nearly the whole of the north of Scotland. Athole, a Stewart, was considered the leader of that party which had recently attached themselves to the young king, under the hope of prevailing upon him to assume the government in his own person. Being a Roman Catholic, he was, for this reason, much suspected by Morton; and he, in his turn, hated the regent for his cruel conduct to Lethington, to whom Athole had been linked in the closest friendship. Argyle, on the other hand, although he had formerly been united with Morton in most of his projects, was now completely estranged from his old comrade; and the cause of quarrel was to be traced to the

¹ Calderwood, MS. Hist., British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, No. 4735, p. 1053 of the MS.

regent's cupidity. Argyle had married the widow of the Regent Moray, Agnes Keith, a sister of the Earl Marshal, and through her had got possession of some of the richest of the queen's jewels. These Mary had delivered to Moray in a moment of misplaced confidence. He, as was asserted, had advanced money upon them to the state; at his death they remained in the hands of his widow; and Morton now insisted on recovering them, in obedience to an order given on the subject by parliament. Argyle and his lady resisted; and although the jewels were at last surrendered, it was not till the noble persons who detained them were threatened with arrest. This, and other causes of dispute, had entirely alienated Argyle from Morton: but, for a short season, the regent derived security from the sanguinary contests between the two northern earls themselves. Their private warfare, however, which had threatened to involve in broils and bloodshed the whole of the north, was suddenly composed; and by one of those rapid changes which were by no means unfrequent in feudal Scotland, the two fierce rivals, instead of destroying each other, united in a league against the regent. This new state of things is to be traced to the influence of Alexander Erskine, the governor of the king and commander of Stirling castle. This gentleman had recently discovered that Morton, with that subtle and treacherous policy of which he had already given many proofs, was secretly plotting to get possession of the person of the young monarch, and to place a creature of his own in command of the castle of Stirling. To confound his scheme, Erskine, who was beloved by the higher nobles, and a principal member of the confederacy which had been formed for the king's protection, wrote secretly to Athole and Argyle, inviting them to come to Stirling, assuring them that James was already well disposed to redress their complaints against the regent, and promising them immediate access to the royal person.

It is scarcely to be believed that

these plots and jealousies should have altogether escaped the attention of Morton. He had his secret emissaries both in Scotland and in England, and he must have been well aware of his increasing unpopularity. The age of the young king, who had now entered on his twelfth year, and begun to take an interest in the government, admonished him that every succeeding year would render it a more difficult task for any regent to engross the supreme power; and as long as James remained under the care of Alexander Erskine, whom he had reason to believe his enemy, it was evident that the continuance of his authority must be precarious. Already, he saw his sovereign surrounded by those who, for their own ends, sought to persuade him that he was arrived at an age when he ought to take the government into his own hands.

So far-sighted and experienced a political intriguer as Morton could not be sensible of all this, without speculating on the best mode of encountering the storm when it did arrive, and averting the wreck of his power. To continue sole regent much longer was evidently full of difficulty; but to flatter the young monarch by a nominal sovereignty, and to rule him as effectually under the title of king, as he had done when sole regent, would be no arduous matter, considering his tender years, provided he could undermine the influence of Erskine, his governor, and crush the confederacy with Argyle and Athole. In the mean season, he resolved to await his time and watch their proceedings. But the regent, although cautious and calculating, was not aware of the full extent of the confederacy against him; and the catastrophe arrived more suddenly than he had anticipated. The intrigues of Argyle and Athole had not escaped the eyes of Walsingham; and in December 1577, Elizabeth, suspecting an impending revolution, despatched Sir Robert Bowes to Scotland, with the hope of preventing any open rupture between Morton and the nobility. He was instructed to inculcate the absolute necessity of

union, to prevent both themselves and her kingdom from falling a sacrifice to the practices of foreign powers; and to threaten Morton, that, if he continued refractory, and refused to make up his differences with his opponents, she would make no scruple to cast him off, and herself become a party against him. He carried also a flattering letter from the queen to the Earl of Athole, in which she assured him of her favourable feelings, and recommended peace.¹

For a moment, the envoy appears to have succeeded; but he was aware that the friendship professed on both sides was hollow, and the lull of civil faction only temporary. This is evident from a letter which he wrote to Leicester, upon his return to Berwick. "Albeit," said he, "those matters [in Scotland] are for a season wrapped up, yet it is not unlike, without wise handling and some charge to her majesty, that the fire will be readily kindled again. . . . The readiest way, in my opinion, to preserve the realm in quietness, with continuance of this amity, is to appease and ——² all the griefs between the regent and others of the realm, and by friendly reconciliation and union to make him gracious amongst them; for which he must receive some apt lessons, with gentleness, from her majesty: but with the same, he must also receive some comfort agreeable to his nature."³ It is evident from this, that Bowes had become convinced that, to conciliate Morton and preserve peace, Elizabeth must deal less in objurgation, and more in solid coin, than she had lately done; nor need we wonder that the envoy, afraid of undertaking so delicate a task, was happy to return. But the queen, who had received some new and alarming information of the success of

French intrigue in Scotland, commanded him to revisit Edinburgh, and watch the proceedings of both parties. Even this, however, did not appear enough; and soon after, Randolph was despatched on a mission to the young king and the regent, its object being similar to that of Bowes, but his instructions more urgent and decided.⁴ Some delay, however, occurred; and he had scarcely arrived in Scotland, when the clouds which had been so long gathering burst upon the head of the regent. The rapidity of the movements of the conspirators, and their complete success, were equally remarkable. On the 4th of March 1577-8, Argyle rode with his usual retinue to Stirling, and being immediately admitted by Erskine to an interview with the young king, complained loudly of Morton's insolent and oppressive conduct, not only to himself, but to the whole nobility and people. He implored him to call a convention to examine their grievances; and, if he found them true, to take the government upon himself, and put an end to a system which, whilst it cruelly oppressed his subjects, left him nothing but the name of a king. These arguments were enforced by Erskine the governor; the famous Buchanan, one of the tutors of the young monarch, threw all his weight into the same scale; and the other confederates who had joined the conspiracy, Glammis the chancellor, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the secretary, Tullibardine the comptroller, and the Lords Lindsay, Ruthven, Ogilvy, and others, eagerly joined in recommending such a course. Athole at this time was absent: but he arrived, no doubt by concert, at the moment his presence was most necessary; and being instantly admitted into the castle, and led to the king, his opinion was urgently demanded. Scarcely, however, had he time to deliver it, and to express his

¹ MS. Instructions to Thomas Randolph, January 30, 1577-8, State-paper Office. Original draft of MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Queen's Majesty to the Earl of Athole, December 1577.

² A word in the original is here illegible.

³ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 86, Sir R. Bowes to Leicester, October 0, 1577, Berwick.

⁴ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 3, Instructions given, 31st January, to Thomas Randolph. Also MS., State-paper Office, Mr Randolph's several Instructions in his Ambassades.

detestation of the tyranny by which they had been so long kept down, when a messenger brought letters from Morton, keenly reprobating the conduct of the northern earls. He remonstrated with the king on the outrage committed against his royal person and himself; represented the necessity of inflicting on such bold offenders speedy and exemplary punishment; and concluded by declaring his anxiety to resign his office, if his royal master was prepared to overlook such proceedings. This offer was too tempting to be rejected: letters were addressed to the nobility, requiring their instant attendance at court. Argyle, Athole, and Erskine took care that those summonses should find their way only to their friends. The convention assembled; a resolution was unanimously passed that the king should take the government upon himself; and before the regent had time to retract, he was waited upon by Glammis the chancellor, and Lord Herries, who brought a message from his sovereign, requiring his immediate resignation. Although startled at the suddenness of the demand, Morton was too proud, or too wary, to pretend any repugnance. He received the envoys with cheerfulness; rode with them from his castle at Dalkeith to the capital; and there, at the Cross, heard the herald and the messenger-at-arms proclaim his own deprivation, and the assumption of the government by the young king. He then, in the presence of the people, resigned the ensigns of his authority; and, without a murmur or complaint, retired to one of his country seats, where he seemed wholly to forget his ambition, and to be entirely engrossed in the tranquil occupations of husbandry and gardening.

The news of this revolution was instantly communicated by Randolph to his friend Killigrew, in this laconic and characteristic epistle, written when he was on the eve of throwing himself on horseback to proceed to England, and in person inform Elizabeth of the alarming change:—

“ All the devils in hell are stirring

and in great rage in this country. The regent is discharged, the country broken, the chancellor slain by the Earl of Crawford, four killed of the town out of the castle, and yet are we in hope of some good quietness, by the great wisdom of the Earl of Morton. There cometh to her majesty from hence an ambassador shortly. I know not yet who, but Sandy Hay in his company. It behoveth me to be there before: and so shew my wife.”¹

The death of the chancellor, Lord Glammis, here alluded to by Randolph, was in no way connected with the revolution which he describes, but took place in a casual scuffle between his retinue and that of the Earl of Crawford. His high office was bestowed upon Athole, Morton's chief enemy, and the leader of the confederacy which had deposed him. But this, though it preserved the influence of the successful faction, scarcely compensated for the loss of their associate, who was accounted one of the wisest and most learned men in Scotland.

Meanwhile, the confederated nobles followed up their advantages. As the king had not yet completed his twelfth year, a council of twelve was appointed. It consisted of the Earls of Argyle, Athole, Montrose, and Glencairn; the Lords Ruthven, Lindsay, and Herries; the Abbots of Newbottle and Dunfermline; the Prior of St Andrews; and two supernumerary or extraordinary councillors—Buchanan, the king's tutor, and James Makgill, the clerk-register. All royal letters were to be signed by the king and four of this number; and as the first exercise of their power, they required from Morton the delivery of the castle of Edinburgh, the palace of Holyrood, the mint, and the queen's jewels and treasure. To all this prostration of his former greatness, he appears to have made no resistance; but simply requested, that, in the next parliament, they should pass an act approv-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Killigrew, 20th March 1577—that is, 1577-8. Signed jocularly, *Thomazo del Niente*. Sandy Hay was Alexander Hay, clerk-regis-ter.

ing of his administration during his continuance in the regency. Morton then held a hurried conference with Randolph, before that ambassador set off for the English court, intrusted him with a brief letter to Lord Burghley, written in his new character as a private man,¹ and seemed prepared, with perfect contentment, to sink into that condition.

It was evident, however, from the expressions he used in this short note, that he had informed Randolph of some ulterior design for his resumption of power, which he did not choose to commit to writing; and that the ambassador, long versant in Scottish broils and intrigues, considered it a wise and likely project. Nor was he wrong in this conclusion: for the development of this counter-revolution, which restored Morton to power, followed almost immediately; and the outbreak was as sudden as the success was complete.

The king's lords, as Argyle and his friends were called, had formed their council,² assembled in the capital, conferred the chancellor's place on Athole, and proclaimed a parliament to be held on the 10th of June. On the 24th of April, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh; and having chosen Mr Andrew Melvil to be their moderator, proceeded to their deliberations with their usual zeal and energy. It was determined to revise the Book of Church Polity, and lay it before the king and council; and a blow was aimed at the late episcopal innovations, by a declaration that, owing to the great corruption already visible in the state of bishops, no see should be filled up till the next General Assembly of the Church.³ During these transactions Morton lived in retirement, and appeared wholly engrossed in his rural occupations; but he had secretly gained to his interest the young Earl of Mar, whose sister

was the wife of Angus, Morton's heir, and the head of the house of Douglas. To Mar he artfully represented that he was unjustly and shamefully treated by his uncle, Erskine the governor. He, the young earl, who was no longer a boy, was entitled by hereditary right to the government of Stirling castle; but his uncle usurped it, and with it kept hold of the king's person. It was Alexander Erskine, not the Earl of Mar, who was now considered the head of that ancient house. Would he submit to this ignominy, when, by a bold stroke, he might recover his lost rights; when the house of Douglas, with all its strength and vassalage, was ready to take his part; and his uncles, the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, offered their counsel and assistance? These arguments easily gained over the young lord; and as he and his retinue were generally lodged in the castle, he determined to put Morton's plan in execution.

On the 26th April, about five in the morning, before many of the garrison were stirring, Mar, who had slept that night in the castle, assembled his retinue, under the pretence of a hunting party, and riding to the gates with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, called for the keys. He was met by his uncle, Erskine the governor, with a small company, who for the moment suspected nothing; but finding himself rudely accosted as a usurper by the abbots, instantly dreaded some false play. To shout treason, seize a halbert from one of the guard, and call to his servants, was with Erskine the work of a moment; but, ere assistance arrived, his little band was surrounded, his son crushed to death in the tumult, and himself thrust without the gates into an outer hall, whilst Mar seized the keys, put down all resistance, and became master of the castle. In the midst of this uproar the young king awoke, and rushing in great terror from his chamber, tore his hair, and called out that the Master of Erskine was slain. He was assured that his governor was safe; and the Earl of Argyle, who had been

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, the Earl Morton to Lord Burghley, March 28, 1578. He signs simply, "Morton."

² MS. Record of the Privy-council, in Register-house, Edinburgh, March 24, 1577-8.

³ MS., Calderwood, pp. 1055-1059.

roused by the tumult, finding the two abbots arguing with Erskine in the hall, but shewing him no personal violence, affected to consider it a family quarrel between the uncle and the nephew, and retired, after advising an amicable adjustment. News of the tumult was, that evening, carried to the council at Edinburgh, accompanied by an assurance from Mar, Argyle, and Buchanan the king's tutor, that the dispute was adjusted. Upon this they despatched Montrose, the same night, to Stirling, who, coming alone, was courteously received and admitted into the castle; but next day, when the council rode thither in a body and demanded admittance, this was peremptorily refused by Mar. They should all see the king, he said, but it must be one by one; and no councillor should enter the gates with more than one attendant.¹

Incensed at this indignity, the council assembled in Stirling, and issued a proclamation, prohibiting any resort of armed men thither, whilst they sent secret orders to convoke their own forces. But their measures were too late; Douglas of Lochleven had already entered the castle, joined Mar, and communicated with Morton, whose hand, it was strongly suspected, although it did not appear, had managed the whole. Angus, meantime, by his directions, was ready, at six hours' warning, with all the armed vassals of the house of Douglas; and the ex-regent, forgetting his gardens and pleasure grounds, hurried from his rural seclusion, and reappeared in public, the same subtle, daring, and unscrupulous leader as before.²

¹ MS., Calderwood, British Museum, p. 1061. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. I.

² Copy, Caligula, C. v. fol. 99, Sir Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley, Edinburgh, April 28, 1578. In this letter of Bowes to Burghley, written in the midst of this revolution, and on the very day the Council rode to Stirling, he says, "What storm shall fall out of these swelling heats, doth not yet appear. But I think, verily, within two or three days, it will burst into some open matter, discovering sufficiently the purposes intended; wherein, to my power, I shall seek to quench all violent rages, and persuade to unity and concord amongst them."

Events now crowded rapidly on each other. At the earnest request of the young king, an agreement took place between Mar and his uncle, Alexander Erskine. The earl retained the castle of Stirling, and with it the custody of the royal person. To the Master of Erskine, so Alexander was called, was given the keeping of the castle of Edinburgh; and in a meeting held at Craigmillar, between Morton, Athole, and Argyle, it was decided that they should next day repair together to Stirling, and adjust all differences before the king in person. This was determined on the 8th of May; and that evening the two northern earls, after sharing Morton's hospitality at Dalkeith, rode with him to Edinburgh. In the morning, however, the ex-regent was nowhere to be found; and it turned out that he had risen before daybreak, and, with a small retinue, had galloped to Stirling, where he was received within the castle, and soon resumed his ascendancy both over Mar and the king.³

Against this flagrant breach of agreement, Argyle and Athole loudly remonstrated; and Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador, exerting himself to restore peace, the young monarch summoned a convention of his nobles; but the northern earls and their associates received such a proposal with derision, and sent word by Lord Lindsay, that they would attend no convention held by their enemies, within a fortress which they commanded. Other lords obeyed, but came fully armed, and with troops of vassals at their back; and both factions mustered in such strength, and exhibited such rancour, that, but for the remonstrances of Bowes, the country would have hurried into war.

Amidst the clamour and confusion, however, it was evident that the ex-regent directed all. By his persuasion a new council was appointed, in which he held the chief place. It was next

³ MS., Calderwood, British Museum. Ayscough, 4735, p. 1061. Also original draft, State-paper Office, Articles delivered by Argyle, Athole, &c., to Lord Lindsay.

determined to send the Abbot of Dunfermline as ambassador from the young king to Elizabeth. He was instructed to thank that princess for the special favour with which she had regarded him from his birth, to confirm the peace between the two countries, and to propose a stricter league for mutual defence, and the maintenance of true religion.¹

The parliament had been summoned to meet in July at Edinburgh : but Morton was well aware of his unpopularity in that city, and dreaded to bring the king into the midst of his enemies. By his persuasion, therefore, the young monarch changed the place of assembly to the great hall within Stirling castle, where he knew all would be secure. But this new measure gave deep offence ; and when the day approached, Argyle, Athole, Montrose, Lindsay, and Herries, with their adherents, assembled in the capital, declaring that nothing should compel them to attend a parliament within a citadel garrisoned by their mortal enemies, and where it would be a mockery to expect any free discussion.

Despising this opposition, Morton hurried on his measures, and the estates assembled in the great hall within Stirling castle.² It was opened by the king in person ; but scarcely had the members taken their seats, when Montrose and Lord Lindsay presented themselves as commissioners from Argyle, Athole, and their adherents, and declared that this could in no sense be called a free parliament. It was held, they said, within an armed fortress ; and for this cause the noble peers, whose messengers they were, had refused to attend it ; "and we now come," said Lindsay, with his usual brevity and bluntness, "to protest against its proceedings." Morton here interrupted him, and commanded him and his companion to take their places ; to which Lindsay answered, that he would stand there till the king ordered him to his seat. James then re-

peated the command, and the old lord sat down. After a sermon, which was preached by Duncanson, the minister of the royal household, and a harangue by Morton, who, in the absence of Athole, the chancellor, took upon him to fill his place, the estates proceeded to choose the Lords of the Articles ; upon which Lindsay again broke in upon the proceedings, calling all to witness, that every act of such a parliament was null, and the choosing of the lords an empty farce. This second attack threw Morton into an ungovernable rage, in which he unsparingly abused his old associate. "Think ye, sir," said he, "that this is a court of churls or brawlers ? Take your own place, and thank God that the king's youth keeps you safe from his resentment."—"I have served the king in his minority," said Lindsay, "as faithfully as the proudest among ye ; and I think to serve his grace no less truly in his majority." Upon which Morton was observed to whisper something in the king's ear, who, blushing and hesitating, delivered himself of a little speech, which, no doubt, had been prepared for him beforehand. "Lest any man," said he, "should judge this not to be a free parliament, I declare it free ; and those who love me will think as I think."³

This silenced Lindsay, and the proceedings went on ; but Montrose, abruptly leaving the hall, rode post to Edinburgh. It was reported that he bore a secret letter from the king, imploring his subjects to arm and relieve him from the tyranny of Morton. It is certain that the recusant earl drew a vivid picture of the late regent's insolence, and roused the citizens to such a pitch of fury, that they mustered in arms, and declared that they would rescue their sovereign from the hands of a traitor who had sold them to the English. Nothing could be more grateful to Argyle and Athole than such a spirit ; and sending word to the townsmen, that they would speedily join them with a force which would soon bring their enemies to rea-

¹ MS. draft, State-paper Office, June 18, 1578.

² July 16, 1578.

³ MS., Calderwood, British Museum, pp. 1062, 1065.

son, they summoned their feudal services, and prepared for war.¹

Montrose's sudden retreat saved him from imprisonment; for next day an order of privy-council appeared, commanding him and Lindsay his associate to confine themselves to their own lodgings under pain of rebellion.² In the meantime, the parliament proceeded. Morton's demission of the regency, and the king's acceptance of the government, were confirmed: an ample approval and discharge was given him of all the acts done during his regency, and a new council appointed, in which he himself sat as chief, and could, in any emergency, command a majority. The revolution was thus complete. He had lost the name of regent, but he had retained his power; and the nominal assumption of the government by the young king had removed many difficulties which before trammelled and perplexed him.³

But this daring and experienced politician had men to deal with, who, having been trained in his own school, were not easily put down; and scarcely had the arrangements for the new government been completed, when Argyle and Athole occupied the city of Edinburgh, and communicating with the leading ministers of the Kirk, now completely estranged from Morton, assembled their forces. It was in vain that Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador, remonstrated against this; in vain that a charge from the privy-council was fulminated against the two earls, commanding them, on pain of treason, to depart from Edinburgh within twenty-four hours. Both sides flew to arms: the country, so lately restored to peace, again resounded with warlike preparation: proclamations and counter-proclamations were discharged against each other; summonses for their armed vassals issued in every direc-

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, August 19, 1578, Berwick.

² MS. Books of Privy-council, Register-house, Edinburgh, 17th July 1578.

³ Draft, State-paper Office, Names of the King's Ordinary Council, and Acts of Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 94.

tion; and so readily were the orders obeyed, that Argyle and Athole, who had marched out of Edinburgh on the 11th August with only one thousand men, found themselves, on mustering at Falkirk on the 13th, seven thousand strong. Of these troops the greater part were animated by the deadliest hatred of Morton, especially the hardy bands of the Merse and Teviotdale, led by their wardens, Coldingknowes and Cessford. They carried before them a banner of blue sarsenet, on which was painted a boy within a grated window, with the distich, "*Liberty I crave, and cannot it have.*"⁴ This was meant to represent the king's thraldom to Morton; and below it was their answer, declaring that they would die to set him free. On the other side came Angus, who had been recently proclaimed lieutenant-general to the king, with a body of five thousand men; and the skirmishing between the advanced parties of each army had commenced, when Sir Robert Bowes, accompanied by Lawson and Lindsay, the two principal ministers of the Kirk, rode hastily from the capital, and again offered himself, in the name of his mistress the Queen of England, as a peacemaker between the rival factions.⁵

In this humane office, after prolonged and bitter discussions, he was successful. The young king, or rather Morton in his name, declared that, foreseeing the wreck and misery of the realm, if the present divisions were not speedily removed, he was ready to meet the wishes of the Queen of England; and therefore commanded his nobility, on both sides, to disband their forces. To reassure Argyle and Athole's faction, their late conduct in taking arms was accepted as loyal service; Argyle, Lindsay, and Morton, so recently denounced traitors, were added to the privy-council; a committee of eight noblemen was to be

⁴ MS. Letter, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, Lori Hunsdon to Burghley, Berwick, August 19, 1578. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. II. In these transactions the celebrated Buchanan acted as a kind of Secretary of State. Calderwood, MS., fol. 1071.

⁵ MS. Calderwood, p. 1071.

chosen, to advise with the king upon the best mode of reconciling his nobility; and, from this moment, free access was to be afforded to all noblemen, barons, or gentlemen, who came to offer their service to their prince.¹ To these conditions both parties agreed; and by the judicious management of Bowes, Scotland was saved for the present from the misery of civil war.

This minister, after the service he had thus performed, remained for some time resident ambassador at the Scottish court, where Morton's successful intrigues had once more established him as the chief ruler in the state; a result which was viewed with much satisfaction by Elizabeth, who, even after his demission of his high office, had never ceased to give him the title of regent.² For the name, however, he cared little; it was power to which he looked; and this, having for the moment secured, he was determined not speedily again to lose. The great principles upon which he had hitherto conducted the government, were a strict amity with England, opposition to all foreign intrigue, a determined resistance to the deliverance of the Scottish queen, and a resolution to maintain the Protestant Reformation. On this last important point, however, his motives had become suspected by the influential body of the ministers of the Kirk. This was owing to his introduction into Scotland of the episcopal form of church government, and his resistance to the Book of Church Polity, which had been drawn up by the General Assembly, and presented to the king and the three estates for their approval. Yet still, although no longer the favourite of the clergy, Morton was anti-Catholic enough to be preferred by them to Athole, a professed Roman Catholic, and his associates, who, for the most part, were either avowed or suspected Romanists; and for the present the

ministers refrained from endangering the restored peace of the country by any violence of opposition.

Yet it was impossible for any acute observer not to see that the times were precarious. The elements of discord were lulled in their active efforts, but not destroyed; the intrigues of France and Spain for the deliverance of Mary, and the re-establishment of the ancient faith, were still busily carried on; and Bowes, the ambassador, who from long experience was intimately acquainted with the state of the rival factions, regarded the court and the country as on the eve of another change. On the 3d November, shortly previous to his leaving Scotland, he thus wrote from Edinburgh to Lord Burghley:—

“By my common letters to the lords of her majesty's council, the weltering estate of this realm, that now attendeth but a tide for a new alteration of the court, will appear to your lordship, and how necessary it is in this change approaching, and in the confederacies presently knitting, to get some hold for her majesty amongst them.”³ It had been his own earnest endeavour to get such hold over them; and for this purpose he had entered into negotiations with the Earl of Caithness, one of the principal leaders of the confederacy against Morton. He and his associates had sent articles of agreement, in the usual form, to the English ambassador: but they expected also the usual gratuity, and, as it turned out, valued their devotion to Elizabeth at a higher rate than that parsimonious princess was disposed to reckon it. Caithness, indeed, was of loose and accommodating principles, both in politics and religion; and although Bowes flattered himself that, on his departure from Scotland, he had left the faction opposed to Morton very favourably disposed to England, he did not conceal from Walsingham his apprehensions that the continuance of this feeling was precarious. “I fear,” said he, in his

¹ MS., State-paper Office, copy of the time, articles agreed on in Scotland between the King and the Lords, 13th August 1578.

² Instructions to Randolph, 31st January 1578, Caligula, C. v. fol. 111, British Museum.

³ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 109, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, Edinburgh, November 3, 1578.

letter to this minister, “that no great inwardness shall be found in them, when they find her majesty’s liberality coming slowly to them, that use not often at the fairest call to stoop to empty lure.”¹

These apprehensions of the English minister regarding the unsettled state of Scotland were not without good foundation. Mary’s indefatigable friend, the Bishop of Ross, whose intrigues in the affair of the Duke of Norfolk had already given such alarm to Elizabeth, was now busily employed on the continent, exciting France, Spain, Germany, and the Papal court to unite for her deliverance; and holding out the present crisis of affairs in Scotland as eminently favourable for the restoration of the true faith. The extent to which these operations were carried, was amply proved by a packet of intercepted letters, written in cipher, and seized by Walsingham or Burghley, whose spies and informers were scattered all over Europe. It was found that the Earl of Athole, a Roman Catholic, the great leader of the late cabal against Morton, and chancellor of Scotland, was in constant correspondence with the Bishop of Ross. The letters of the Scottish queen herself, written immediately after Morton’s resignation of the regency, to the same prelate, and directed to be communicated to the Pope, expressed her satisfaction at the late revolution in Scotland, and her zealous concurrence with his holiness in his project for the restitution of the true faith in Britain, by the united efforts of the great Catholic powers. She alluded, in the same letter, to a project for the carrying off her son, the young king, to the continent, which the Pope had offered to forward by an advance of money. She informed him, that in consequence of the changes in Scotland since Morton’s demission, she felt perfectly assured of the affection and services

of the young prince, and of his counsellors; she urged the necessity of placing him, if possible, in the hands of her friends of the house of Lorraine—alluding to the imminent danger he incurred from Elizabeth’s intrigues to get possession of his person, or even to deprive him of his life. She declared her conviction, that if her son were once in France, and removed from the sphere of Elizabeth’s influence, a more lenient treatment of herself would ensue; and, lastly, she directed Ross to communicate upon all these matters with the Pope’s nuncio at Paris.²

In an intercepted letter, written about the same time by Beaton, bishop of Glasgow, Mary’s ambassador at the court of France, to the Bishop of Ross, the determination of Henry the Third and the Duke of Guise to assist her to their utmost, was clearly intimated.³ In the autumn of the same year, and soon after the pacification between the rival factions in Scotland, which we have seen effected by Bowes, the Bishop of Ross made a progress into Germany, with the object of exciting the emperor and the duke of Bavaria to unite with the other Catholic powers for the speedy liberation of his royal mistress, and the restoration of religion. From both potentates he received the utmost encouragement. The emperor declared his readiness to co-operate with the endeavours of his brother princes for the deliverance of the Scottish queen, and the securing to her and her son their undoubted right to the English throne; and the duke professed his determination to peril both property and life itself for the restoration of the Catholic faith.⁴ This encouraging information was conveyed by Ross to the Cardinal Como, in a letter written

² MS., British Museum, ex cyphris Regiae Scotiae ad Episcopum Rossensem, Caligula, C. v. fol. 102.

³ Ex literis Archiesp. Glascuensis ad Episcop. Rossen., June 14, 1578. Caligula, C. v. fol. 103 d., British Museum.

⁴ MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 104 d. Ex literis Episcop. Rossensis ad Cardinalem Comensem, Pragæ, September 27, 1578.

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 110. Sir R. Bowes to _____, November 24, 1578. I suspect to Walsingham.

from Prague on the 27th September 1578, which, unfortunately for his mistress, fell into the hands of her enemies; and, at the same time, this indefatigable prelate, at the request of the emperor, had drawn up a paper on the state of parties in Scotland, in which he carefully marked the relative strength of the Roman Catholic and Protestant peers,¹ and pointed out the favourable crisis which had occurred. In a second interview, to which the emperor admitted him, he described the state of parties in Scotland, following certain directions communicated by his royal mistress;² and by all these united exertions, there is no doubt that a deep impression was made throughout Europe in favour of the Scottish queen. Well, therefore, might Sir Robert Bowes describe the condition of affairs in Scotland as one full of alarm; and before we condemn Elizabeth for her severity to Mary, we must weigh the perils to the Protestant cause which these intercepted letters so clearly demonstrated. But, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten, that these very dangers arose out of the injustice of her imprisonment.

In the meantime, Morton once more bore the chief sway in Scotland, where his triumph over the conspiracy of Athole and Argyle had really increased his power; whilst his possession of the king's person enabled him to overawe the young monarch as effectually as he had ever done when regent. This resumption of strength he now employed to crush the house of Hamilton.

The Duke of Chastelherault was dead; his eldest son, the Earl of Arran, had been insane for some years; and in these melancholy circumstances, the leaders of this potent and ancient family were his brothers, the Lord of Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton. Arbroath, in the event of the death of Mary and the young king, was next heir to the throne; and his possessions were described by Bowes as the

greatest and the richest in Scotland.³ These lands were conterminous with the vast estates of the Earl of Angus, which included nearly all the "Overward" of Clydesdale, as Arbroath's did the "Netherward;" and Morton and the Douglases had long looked upon them with greedy eyes. But although his enmity against Arbroath and his brother was entirely selfish, Morton was not guilty of injustice when he persuaded the young king that it was his duty to proceed with severity against the house of Hamilton: it had a long reckoning of crime and blood to account for. There was little doubt that the late Archbishop of St Andrews, its chief leader and adviser, had suffered justly as an accessory to the murder of Darnley; and this cast a strong suspicion of implication upon its present leaders. It was certain that they were guilty of the death of the Regent Moray; it was as undoubted that Lord Claud Hamilton had given the order which led to the murder of the Regent Lennox; and the houses of Mar and Douglas were bitterly hostile to the whole race.

The Hamiltons being thus miserably situated, the terrible work of feudal retribution commenced, and was prosecuted in the rapid and cruel spirit of the times. Morton and Angus in person besieged the castle of Hamilton, commanded by Arthur Hamilton of Merton.⁴ He offered to surrender on being assured of his life, and pardon to himself and his garrison of all their offences, except the murder of the king and the two regents; but these terms were scornfully refused, and he was at last compelled to submit unconditionally.⁵ Much interest was made to save him: but Mar and Buchan, with Lochleven, and James Douglas, a natural son of Morton's, were furious

³ MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 105. Also draft of the King's Proclamation against John Hamilton, sometime Commender of Arbroath, and Claud Hamilton, sometime Commender of Paisley, dated May 2, 1579, Bowes Papers.

⁴ May 4, 1579.

⁵ MS. Letter to Sir George Bowes, from (as I suspect) Mr Archibald Douglas, Edinburgh, May 24, 1579, copy of the time, Bowes Papers.

¹ MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 105.

² Ibid., fol. 106.

at the idea of his escaping their vengeance; declaring that the lives of any ten Hamiltons were a poor recompence for the Regent Moray. He and his company, therefore, were hanged; amongst whom was Arthur Hamilton, a brother of Bothwellhaugh who had shot the regent, and who was known to have held the stirrup when the murderer threw himself on horseback and escaped.¹ The castle of Drafen, another stronghold of this great family, in which the Duchess of Chastelherault and the unfortunate Earl of Arran had taken refuge, was invested and taken about the same time, its garrison having abandoned it during the night; and in a convention of the nobility held soon after at Stirling, it was determined to complete the ruin of this devoted house by processes of treason in the next parliament. Nothing could be more wretched than its condition at this moment: the Lord of Arbroath had fled to Flanders, where he was an almost houseless exile; Lord Claude escaped to England, and threw himself upon the compassion of Elizabeth; its lesser chiefs were trembling under an impending sentence of forfeiture; and its head, the Earl of Arran, whose royal descent and great power had made him, in former days, an almost accepted suitor, first of Elizabeth, and afterwards of Mary, was a prisoner, hopelessly insane, and placed, with his unhappy mother the duchess, under the charge of Captain Lammie, a soldier of fierce and brutal habits, and a determined enemy of the house of Hamilton. Yet these accumulated miseries do not appear to have excited the slightest degree of sympathy in this unfeeling age; and when Elizabeth, compassionating the misfortunes of the Hamiltons, despatched her envoy, Captain Arrington, to plead their cause at the Scottish court, he

found the young king, and the whole body of the nobility, inflamed with the deepest hatred against them, expressing a conviction that their restoration would be dangerous to his person, and resolute against their pardon or return.²

In the midst of these cruel transactions, Athole the chancellor, and the great leader of the confederacy against Morton, died suddenly, under circumstances of much suspicion.³ He had just returned from a banquet, given by Morton at Stirling to commemorate the reconciliation of the nobles; and the symptoms of poison so strongly indicated themselves both before and after death, that his friends did not hesitate to say publicly that he had met with foul play from the ex-regent, who, however, treated the report with contempt. The body was opened, and examined by a learned circle of "mediciners, chirurgeons, and poticaries;" but they disagreed in their verdict. By some the poison was so plainly detected, that they declared there was not a doubt upon the subject; whilst Dr Preston, the most eminent physician of the time, was equally positive that there was no poison in the case,—certainly none in the stomach. On being irritated by contradiction, however, he had the temerity to touch a portion of its contents with his tongue, and, to the triumph of his dissentient brethren, almost died in consequence, nor did he ever completely recover the unlucky experiment.⁴ In

² MS. Letter, British Museum, Nicholas Arrington to Burghley, October 10, 1579, Berwick, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. III.

³ He died at Kincardine castle, near Auchterarder, on the north side of the Ochils, a stronghold of the Earl of Montrose, on the 25th April 1579. "The whole friends of the dead are convened at Dunkeld upon the 3d of May, where the young Earls of Athole and Montrose put in deliberation what were best way to come by revenge of this heinous fact." MS. Letter, 5th May 1579, without a signature, to Sir George Bowes, enclosed in a letter to Mr Archibald Douglas. Bowes Papers. Also MS. Letter, Bowes Papers, — to Sir R. Bowes. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. IV.

⁴ MS., Calderwood, British Museum, pp. 1083, 1084.

¹ MS., British Museum, Occurrences out of Scotland, May 14, 1579, and May 24, 1579, Caligula, C. v. fol. 120, copy. Also MS. Letter, May 9, Bowes Papers. Also MS. ibid., Caligula, C. v. fol. 122, Notes of Occurrences, 1st June 1579. Also MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, 4735, fol. 1083.

the meantime, though the dark report was thus strengthened, Morton's power, and the absence of all direct proof, protected him from any further proceedings.

Some time after this, the General Assembly of the Kirk met at Edinburgh; and having chosen Mr Thomas Smeton for their moderator, at his request appointed a council of the brethren to advise with him upon matters of importance. To this council Mr Thomas Duncanson, minister of the royal household, presented a letter from the young king, which contained a request that the Assembly would at present abstain from debating upon such matters touching the polity of the Kirk, as in a former conference had been referred for debate and decision to the estates of parliament. The same letter informed them that parliament would shortly meet and take these matters into consideration; and it expressed the king's hope that, in the mean season, the Assembly would exert themselves to promote peace and godly living, not only amongst their own members, but throughout the whole body of the subjects of the realm; so that the expectations of such busy meddlers as were enemies to the public tranquillity should be disappointed.

The Assembly having taken this royal letter into consideration, in its turn appointed a committee of their brethren, the principal of whom were Erskine of Dun, Duncanson the king's minister, and Andrew Melvil, to wait upon the king, with some requests to which they besought his attention. These were, that he would interdict all parents, under heavy penalties, from sending their children to be educated at the university of Paris, or other foreign colleges professing Papistry; that he would cause the university of St Andrews, some of whose professors had recently left the Protestant communion, to be reformed in all its colleges and foundations; and take order for the banishment of Jesuits, whom the Assembly denominated "the pestilent dregs of a most detestable idolatry." They further

besought him to proceed to a further conference upon such points of church polity as had been left undetermined at the last conference at Stirling, and to desist from controlling or suspending, by his royal letters, any of the decrees of the General Assembly.¹ Calderwood, the zealous and able historian of the Scottish Kirk, has pronounced a high eulogium upon the learning, holiness, and unanimity of this Assembly.²

Not long after this, Esmé Stewart, commonly called Monsieur d'Aubigny, cousin to the king, and a youth of graceful figure and accomplishments, arrived in Scotland.³ He was the son of John Stewart, brother of Matthew, earl of Lennox, the late regent, and had scarce been a week at court when he became a great favourite with his royal relative. It was immediately whispered that he had been sent over by the Guises, to fill Athole's place as leader of the French faction, and to act as a counterpoise to the predominating influence of Morton. He was accompanied by Monsieur Memberneau, and Mr Henry Ker,—the first, a man of great wit and liveliness, gay, gallant, and excelling in all the sports and pastimes to which the young monarch was partial; the second, Ker, of a more subtle and retired character,—who had been long a confidential servant of D'Aubigny's, and was strongly suspected by the ministers of the Kirk to be a secret agent of the Guises.

All this excited the fears of Elizabeth; and the information sent her by her secret agents, both in Scotland and France, was by no means calculated to remove her apprehension. As D'Aubigny and his friends, however, acted as yet with great caution and reserve, the queen contented herself, for the moment, with a mission of observation and inquiry; for which she

¹ MS., Calderwood, sub anno 1579, British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, 4735, p. 1092.

² Ibid., fol. 1092.

³ On the 8th September 1579, MS. Letter, Bowes Papers, an anonymous correspondent, whose mark is 4^o, to Sir G. Bowes, 9th Sept.

selected Captain Nicolas Arrington, a brave and intelligent officer of the garrison of Berwick, who had already been repeatedly employed in Scotland. His open instructions were to intercede with James for some favour to the Hamiltons; his more secret orders, to acquaint himself with the character and intentions of D'Aubigny, the state of parties, and what projects were then agitated for the young king's marriage. On the first point, the pardon, or at least the more lenient punishment of the house of Hamilton, he prevailed nothing, so deep was James's hatred, or perhaps more truly that of Morton, against it. With regard to the marriage, Arrington informed Burghley, that neither the council nor D'Aubigny had yet made any formal proposal upon the subject. "It was evident," he said, "that the young French stranger had already won the affection of his royal kinsman, and might look for high preferment," probably to be Earl of Lennox, with a large share of the forfeited lands of the Hamiltons, if he could be prevailed upon to change his religion.¹

The old soldier who thus wrote to Burghley, requested his indulgence, should his information prove incorrect, as he had been more familiar with "another weapon than the pen;" but the course of events soon proved the accuracy of his intelligence. Wherever James went, he insisted on having D'Aubigny beside him. When he removed, for the purpose of holding his parliament, from Stirling to Holyrood, his graceful cousin had splendid apartments provided for him in the palace, next to the royal bed-chamber; and in the sports and pageants with which the citizens received their monarch, the favourite, for so he was now declared, found himself universally regarded and courted. The expensive scale on which these civic festivities were conducted, evinced a remarkable increase in the national wealth. They exhibited the usual confusion of classical, feudal, and religious machinery;

in which, "Dame Musick," attended by four fair virgins representing the cardinal virtues, and the provost and three hundred citizens, clad in velvet and satin, enacted their parts with great assiduity and success. Whilst the 20th Psalm was being sung, a little child emerged from a silver globe, which opened artificially over the king's head, and fluttering down to his majesty's feet, presented him with the keys of the city. Religion, a grave matron, then conducted him into the High Church; and thence, after hearing sermon, the monarch and the congregation repaired to the Market Cross, where Bacchus sat on a gilded puncheon, with his painted garments and a flowery garland; the fountains ran wine; the principal street of the city was hung with tapestry; and, at the conclusion of the procession, the town presented the king with a cupboard of plate, valued, says a minute chronicler, at six thousand merks.²

These pageants were introductory to the parliament which assembled on the 20th of October, and, as had been anticipated by Arrington, was principally occupied with the proscription of the Hamiltons, and the exaltation of D'Aubigny. The Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton, with many more of the same name and house, were proclaimed traitors, and their estates forfeited; whilst all who had been partakers in the slaughter of the two regents, Moray and Lennox, were commanded, under pain of death, to remove six miles from court. On the other hand, the king conferred the earldom of Lennox upon his favourite, and presented him, at the same time, with the rich abbacy of Arbroath. Not long after, the stream of royal favour flowed still more munificently: he was made chamberlain for Scotland; his earldom, it was reported, would be soon erected into a dukedom; and he was so caressed by the young sovereign, that Argyle and many

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130, Nicolas Arrington to Burghley, October 10, 1579, Berwick.

² Moyse's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 25. Also MS., Calderwood, British Museum, vol. ii. p. 1099. Historie of James the Sext, p. 179, Bannatyne edition.

of the principal nobility began not only to treat him with high consideration, but, according to the common usage of the times, to enter into those bands or covenants by which they bound themselves to his service, and with which the reader of this history is already so well acquainted.¹

Morton, however, and the ministers of the Kirk, still kept aloof : the one animated by that proud and haughty feeling which prompted him rather to crush than to court a rival : the ministers, from the horror with which they regarded all Roman Catholics, and the suspicions they had from the first entertained that D'Aubigny was a secret emissary of the Pope and the Guises. When these fears were once excited, the churches resounded with warnings against the dark machinations of Popery ; and the pulpit, as had frequently happened in these times, became a political engine. It was recollected that the Duke of Guise had accompanied D'Aubigny to Dieppe, and remained with him for many hours in secret conference in the ship ; D'Aubigny had been known, also, to have had consultations with the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross ;² and for what purpose (so the ministers argued) could the forty thousand crowns, which he brought with him, be so naturally applied as in corrupting the Protestant nobles ? Nay, was it not known that a part had already found its way into the coffers of the Lady Argyle ? and did not all men see the warm and sudden friendship between her husband the earl and the favourite ?³

Amid these suspicions and jealousies the year 1579 passed away ; and it was apparent to all who regarded the state of the country with attention, that it could not long remain

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 133, and also 135, Bowes to Burghley, October 22, 1579, Berwick. Lennox was created Earl of Lennox (Douglas, vol. ii. p. 99) on March 5, 1579-80.

² State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Paulet to Walsingham, August 29, 1579, Paris.

³ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, sub anno 1579, fol. 1098.

without some sudden change or convulsion. The king was wretchedly poor ; and the revenues of the crown, during his minority, had been plundered and dilapidated to such an extent, that he could not raise three thousand pounds to defray the expenses of his household. The nobility, on the other hand, were rich ; they had prospered as the crown had sunk ; and so determined were they to hold fast their gains, that they "would spare nothing they possessed to the king's aid, without deadly feud."⁴ It had been earnestly recommended that the king's person, in those unsettled times, should be defended by a bodyguard, and that six privy councillors, in rotation, should always remain with the court ; but no funds could be raised to pay the soldiers' wages ; the councillors refused to support a table for themselves ; no money was forthcoming elsewhere ; and the king was frequently left almost alone, without court or council around him ; a state of destitution which, it was justly apprehended, might lead to the most dangerous results.

When Elphinstone, abbot of Dunfermline, was sent to England in the preceding summer,⁵ his main purpose was to explain to the queen the poverty under which the young prince had entered on his government ; the great insecurity of his person, surrounded as he daily was by men "who had dipped their hands in the blood of his parents and dearest kinsfolks ;" and the absolute necessity for a supply of money to pay the expenses of his guards and household.⁶ But Elizabeth could not be induced to advance any supplies ; and these evils and dangers had ever since been on the increase. Since the arrival of Lennox, too, the feuds amongst the nobility had risen to an alarming height. Morton, jealous of the new favourite, and animated by a hatred of Argyle, absented himself

⁴ MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 155, copy Memorial of the present state of Scotland, December 31, 1579.

⁵ July 30, 1578.

⁶ MS., State-paper Office. Demands of the Abbot of Dunfermline, Ambassador from the King of Scots, 30th July 1578.

from court ; the powerful Border septs of the Humes and Cars regarded the ex-regent with the deadliest rancour ; Elphinston, the king's secretary, a man of talent, and long his firm friend, was now estranged from him ; and even the potent Angus, his nephew and his heir, kept at a safe distance, and watched events. But Morton's great wealth, his energy, courage, and experience, made him still a formidable enemy ; and they who most wished his downfall, knew not on what side to attack him. The young king, in the meantime, who had always felt an awe for the late regent, became daily more devoted to Lennox, whom, with a boyish enthusiasm, and a precocious display of theology, he was labouring to convert from what he esteemed his religious errors. He gave him books of controversy, brought him to attend the sermons of the ministers, procured one of the mildest and most learned of their number to instruct him, and so far succeeded, that, if not converted, he was reported to be favourably inclined to the Protestant Church. Any sudden recantation would have been suspicious ; and, meanwhile, his royal and youthful mentor congratulated himself upon his favourite's hopeful and inquiring state.¹

Amid these cares and controversies a sudden rumour arose, none could tell from what quarter, that the Earl of Morton had plotted to seize the king and carry him to Dalkeith. How this was to be affected, no one could tell ; but James, who had ridden out on a hunting expedition, precipitately interdicted the sports, and galloped back to Stirling castle. Morton loudly declared his innocence, and defied his calumniators to bring their proofs ; yet scarcely had this challenge been given, when the court was again thrown into terror and confusion, by news secretly brought to the Earl of Mar, that Lennox and his faction had fixed on the night of the 10th April to invade the royal apartments, lay hands on the king, hurry him to Dum-

barton, and thence transport him to France.² It was whispered, also, that a deep confederacy had been formed against the Earl of Morton by the same junto : that Sir James Balfour, now a fugitive in France, and one who was well known to have been a chief accomplice in the murder of the king's father, had promised to purchase his pardon, by giving up the bond for the murder, signed by Morton's own hand ; and that thus there was every hope of bringing the hoary and blood-stained tyrant to the scaffold, which had so long waited for him.

In the midst of these ominous rumours, the night of the 10th April arrived, and all in the castle prepared for an attack. Mar permitted none to see the king ; soldiers were stationed within and without the royal chamber ; and a shout arising, that Lennox ought to be thrust out of the gates, he shut himself up in his apartments, with a strong guard of his friends, armed at all points, and swore that he would set upon any that dared invade him. In the morning, Argyle, Sutherland, Glencairn, and other adherents of Lennox, hurried to Stirling, but were refused admittance to the castle ; and their fears for Lennox increased, when they heard it reported that Morton was on the road to join his party. All was thus in terror and uncertainty : men gazed, trembled, and whispered fearfully amongst each other, aware that secret plots were busily concocting ; that the ground they stood on was being mined : and yet none could tell where the blow would fall, or when the train might be exploded. At this moment Captain Arrington, Elizabeth's envoy, was in Stirling castle, and thus wrote to Burghley :—“The young king is in heavy case, and much amazed with these troubles, and the more by reason of his great affection towards D'Aubigny, whom he perceives the mark they shoot at. Monsieur d'Aubigny, with his faction, doth offer to abide the trial by law, or otherwise, in their

¹ MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 2, Captain Arrington to Burghley, 4th April 1580, Stirling.

² MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 8, Captain Arrington to Lord Burghley, 16th April 1580, Berwick.

very persons, that there was never any such plot or meaning by him, or his consent, or by any others to their knowledge, to have drawn the king either to Dumbarton or any other sinister course.”¹

It is difficult to arrive at the truth amidst these conflicting accusations of the two factions. Elizabeth certainly had received a warning from her ambassador in France, that there was a design on foot to have the young king brought thither; and Morton had probably been encouraged by the English queen to prevent it by every possible means.² Lennox, on the other hand, although he indignantly, and probably truly, repelled any such treasonable intentions, avowed his wish to reform the council, and protect the king from the pillage of the blood-suckers of the royal revenue, who had been thrust into their offices by Morton and Mar. In this project James himself appears to have borne a part; and had probably intended, under pretence of a hunting party at the Doune of Men-teith, to have escaped from the tutelage of Mar, and accomplished a revolution in the court.³ The secret project, however, was discovered, and defeated by the vigilance of the house of Er-skine.

In the meantime, the picture drawn by Arrington, of the dangerous state of the country, threw Elizabeth into alarm, and she immediately despatched Sir Robert Bowes to Stirling. His instructions were to strengthen, by every means, the decaying influence of Morton; to declare the queen's willingness to gain some of the chief in authority by pensions; to pull down the power of Lennox; to plead for the pardon of the Hamiltons; and thoroughly to sift the truth of the late rumours of a conspiracy for carrying off the young king. Bowes also, be-

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 7, Arrington to Walsingham or Burghley, 10th April 1580, Stirling. The address of the letter is torn away.

² Ibid., fol. 17 and 18, copy, Lord Treasurer and Walsingham to Mr Robert Bowes, April 17, 1580.

³ British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 29, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 10, 1580, Stirling.

fore he set out, received a letter from Secretary Walsingham, recommending him to use the utmost vigilance in this mission. This, he said, was most necessary, as it was already reported in Spain, that mass was set up once more in Scotland, and arms taken against the Protestants; and, as he knew for certain that Kerr of Ferny-hirst, a Roman Catholic and an active friend of the Scottish queen, with Bothwellhaugh, the blood-stained Hamilton who had shot the Regent Moray, had recently ridden post from France into Spain.⁴

On reaching court, the ambassador was received by the young king with great courtesy: but James's manner instantly changed when any allusion was made to the Hamiltons; and it was evident to all that Bowes' exertions on this head would be unavailing.⁵ It was apparent, also, that the revival of Morton's former power promised to be a matter of extreme difficulty. He himself was so completely convinced of the strength of his enemies, and the deep estrangement of the king, that he had resolved to retire altogether from public affairs. In a secret conference, held in the night, with Bowes, at Stirling castle, the ex-regent expressed much doubt whether it was not too late to attempt anything against Lennox, who now professed himself a Protestant, and had so completely conciliated the ministers of the Kirk, that they addressed a letter, in his commendation to the council.⁶

As to the late rumoured conspiracies for carrying off the king, the ambassador found it difficult to discover the truth; but he was witness to a strange scene of violence and brawling before the council, in which Morton, Mar, and Lennox gave the lie to their accusers; and the king, with much feeling and good sense, exerted himself to restore peace: a striking contrast, no doubt, to Bowes' experience of the de-

⁴ Draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, May 3, 1580.

⁵ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 25, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 3, 1580, Stirling.

⁶ Ibid., fol. 31, ibid., May 10, 1580, Stirling.

corous gravity and awe preserved by Elizabeth in her council, in which the highest nobles generally spoke upon their knees, and none but her majesty was permitted to lose temper. On the subject of the alleged plot of Lennox, James was at first reserved, although he expressed much love and admiration for Elizabeth; but the ambassador at last gained his confidence, and drew from him many particulars, which shewed that the conspiracy, intended to have been carried into effect at Doune castle, involved the ruin of Morton, the dismissal of Mar and other obnoxious councillors, and a complete reconstruction of the government under Lennox and Argyle. As it appeared, also, that Sir John Seton, Sir George Douglas, and some of the captive queen's most attached servants, were to have been brought into the council, Bowes at once suspected that the design originated in France, and that Lennox and his youthful sovereign acted under the influence of the Guises. He was the more persuaded of this, when Morton assured him that, since D'Aubigny's arrival, the king's feelings had undergone a great change in favour of that country.

But the time called for action, not for speculation; and on consulting with his friends, regarding the most likely means of averting the dangers threatened by this alarming state of things, there were many conflicting opinions. It was recommended to have tried councillors about the king, and a strong body-guard to prevent surprise; as it had been remarked that the late alarms and plots had all broken out when there was scarce a single councillor at court who could be depended upon. Yet this could not be done without money; and where was money to be had in the present exhausted state of the royal revenue?¹ Soon after this, the ambassador took an opportunity of seeing the young

king alone, and delivering a secret message from Elizabeth, upon a subject of the deepest interest to both: his succession to the English crown after her death. The particulars of the interview, and the answer given by James, were communicated in cipher, in a letter of which the address is now lost, but which was written probably to Burghley or Walsingham, his usual correspondents when the subject was of high moment. "In private with the king," so wrote the ambassador, "I have offered to acquaint him with a secret greatly importing him and his estate, and lately discovered to me by letters, which were not out of the way in case he should desire sight thereof; and, taking his honour in pledge for the secrecy, which he readily tendered, I opened to him, at large, all the contents specified in the cipher note last sent to me, and to be communicated to him, persuading him earnestly to beware that he made not himself the cause of greater loss to him, than France, Scotland, or Lennox, could countervail. He appeared here to be very much perplexed; affirming that he would both most chiefly follow her majesty's advice, and also ask and require her counsel in all his great adoes. . . . In which good resolution and mind," continued Bowes, "I left him; wherein with good company and handling I think he may be well continued. But Lennox having won great interest in him, and possessing free and sure access to him at all times, . . . I dare not, therefore, assure, in his tender years, any long continuance or sure performance of this promise."² These anticipations of James's fickleness proved to be well founded; for neither the prize held out by Elizabeth, nor all the efforts of Bowes, could retain the monarch in his good resolutions. The influence of Lennox and his friends became daily more predominant; his youthful master's arguments on the errors of

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 24 and 27, inclusive, and fol. 28 and 32, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 3, 1580. The same to the same, May 10, 1580.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original, cipher and decipher. The letter contains proof that its date must be May 16 or 17, 1580.

the Church of Rome, seconded by the expositions of the Presbyterian clergy, had, as he affirmed, convinced him; he had publicly avowed his conversion to Protestantism, and had signed the articles of religion drawn up by the Scottish clergy. His enemies were thus deprived of their principal ground of complaint and alarm; and although they accused him of insincerity,—and certainly the circumstances under which this recantation was made were suspicious,—still, as he afterwards died professing himself a Protestant, we have every reason to believe his assertions to have been sincere.¹

But whether at this moment sincere or interested, Lennox's conversion, and consequent increase of power, placed Morton, and the other old friends of England, in a dangerous predicament. Had they been assured of immediate support, they were ready, they said, to resist the intrigues of France, which became every day more successful, the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow keeping

up a correspondence with Lennox. But Elizabeth, as Walsingham confessed to Bowes, was so completely occupied and entangled with the negotiations for her marriage with the Duke of Anjou, that every other subject was postponed. No answer, which promised any certain assistance, arrived; and Morton, wearied out and irritated with this neglect, declared to the ambassador, that he would be constrained to provide for his personal safety by a reconciliation with Lennox. "He utterly distrusted," he said, "Elizabeth's intention to be at any charges for the affairs of Scotland; his own peril was great and imminent; yet, had he been backed by England, he would have adventured to beard his enemies, and to have retained the country at the devotion of the queen. It was too late now; and to save himself from ruin, he would be driven to means which could be profitable to neither of the realms, and were much against his heart."³ Bowes soon after was recalled from Scotland.⁴

CHAPTER II.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1580—1582.

FOR some time after this, Elizabeth's policy towards Scotland was of that vacillating and contradictory kind which estranged her friends and gave confidence to her opponents. She had been early warned by Sir Robert Bowes, then resident at Berwick, of the great strength of the confederacy at the head of which Lennox had placed himself, and that soon no efforts would avail against it.² "Such had

been," he said, "the success of the French intrigues, that Scotland was running headlong the French course;"⁵ and that everything tended to the overthrow of religion, by which we must understand him as meaning the

ber 1, 1580, Walsingham to Bowes. Also September 6, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham; and September 18, 1580, Walsingham to Bowes, original draft.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 2, 1580.

⁴ On the 2d August he seems to have been at Edinburgh; on the 10th August he was at Berwick.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, August 10, 1580.

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi., fol. 36, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 16, 1580.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 27, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham. Also Septem-

Presbyterian party in that country. "Still," he added, "all was not irrecoverable, if the queen would dismiss her parsimony, and take the true way to secure friends." But Elizabeth was deaf to these remonstrances. She alternately flattered, remonstrated, and threatened; but she resolutely refused to "go to any charges;" and the effects of her indecision and neglect were soon apparent.¹

Lennox grew daily more formidable. As he was supported by the favour of the king, and the countenance and money of France, he drew into his party the most powerful of the nobility. His possessions and landed property were already great. Favour after favour was bestowed. Himself, or his friends and retainers, held some of the strongest castles in Scotland; and not long after this, Walsingham, who was anxiously watching his power, heard with dismay, from Bowes, that Dumbarton, one of the most important keys of the kingdom, was to be delivered to the favourite.²

This last determination incensed Elizabeth to the highest pitch. She had for some time been engaged in a secret correspondence with the captain of the castle, the noted Cunningham of Drumwhassel, who had promised to retain it at her devotion; and on the first intimation that it was to be placed in the hands of Lennox, she ordered Sir Robert Bowes to ride post from Berwick into Scotland, with a fiery message, to be delivered to the Scottish council. The imperious and unscrupulous temper of the queen was strongly marked in his instructions. If he found the fortress (for so its great strength entitled it to be called) undelivered, he was to remonstrate loudly against its being surrendered to one who, whatever mask the Pope allowed him to wear, was in his heart

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 31st August 1580; and same to same, August 10, 1580. Also original draft, Elizabeth to Morton, June 22, 1580; and Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1580. Also original draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 1st June 1580.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, August 31, 1580.

an enemy to the gospel. If it was too late, and the castle already given up, he was instantly to confer with Morton how so fatal a step could be remedied: "either," to quote the words of the instructions, "by laying violent hands on the duke and his principal associates, in case no other more temperate course can be found, or by some other way that by him might be thought meet."³

Bowes hurried on to Edinburgh, met with Morton, whom he found still bold, and ready to engage in any attack upon his rival; and had already given him "some comfort to prick him on"—meaning, no doubt, an advance in money, when new letters arrived from the queen. A single day had revived her parsimony, and cooled her resentment: it would be better, she thought, to try persuasion first, and forbear advising force, or any promise of assistance. None could answer for the consequences of a civil war: they might seize the young king, carry him to Dumbarton, and thence transport him to France.⁴

Bowes was directed, at the same time, to alarm James's fears, for a second time, on the subject of the succession; to assure him, in great secrecy, that if he continued obstinately to prefer D'Aubigny's persuasions to the counsels of his mistress, his right would be cut off by an act of parliament, and the title to the English throne established in the person of another.⁵ This threat, however, had been so often repeated, that it produced not the slightest effect; and Elizabeth soon after recalled her ambassador, commanding him, before he left the Scottish court, to upbraid the king with his ingratitude. His farewell interview was a stormy one. His royal mistress, he said, was bitterly mortified to find that this was all the return for her care of James ever since

³ Original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, August 30, 1580. Endorsed by Walsingham's hand, "My letter to Mr Bowes."

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, September 1, 1580.

⁵ State-paper Office, copy, Walsingham to Bowes, September 10, 1580

his cradle. She had little expected to be treated with contempt, and to see promoted to credit and honour the very man against whom she had expressed so much suspicion and dislike; but hereafter, he might find what it was to prefer a Duke of Lennox before a Queen of England.¹

This retirement of Bowes greatly strengthened D'Aubigny. The young king became more attached to the interests of France; he entered into communication with his mother, the imprisoned queen;² and whilst the courts of Rome, Paris, and Madrid united their endeavours to procure her liberty, Lennox persuaded James to second their efforts, and to overwhelm their opponents by a mighty stroke. This was the destruction of Morton, the bitterest enemy of the Scottish queen, and whose recent intrigues with the English ambassador had shewn that, although his power was diminished, his will to work their ruin was as active as before. Their plot against him, which had been in preparation for some time, was now ripe for execution, and it was determined to arraign him as guilty of the murder of Darnley. That he had been an active agent in the conspiracy against that unhappy prince, was certain; and that Archibald Douglas, another powerful member of the house of Douglas, had been personally present at the murder, was well known; but this could be said of others who had escaped prosecution; and as to Morton, although shorn of much of his power and lustre, he was still so dreaded, that no one, for many years, had dared to whisper an accusation against him. The arrival of Lennox, however, had changed the scene; and this new favourite of his sovereign was now risen to such a height of power that, finding the late regent intriguing with Elizabeth against him, he determined to pull down and destroy his enemy at once.

¹ Orig. draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, Oct. 7, 1580. The title of duke here given by Walsingham to Lennox, seems premature. Lennox was not created a duke till August 1581. See *postea*, p. 39.

² See Proofs and Illustrations, No. V.

For this purpose many things then assisted. Morton had quarrelled with the Kirk, and lost the confidence of its ministers; he was hated by the people for his avarice and severe exactions during his regency; and his steady adherence to England had made him odious to the friends of the imprisoned queen and the party of France. Lennox, therefore, had every hope of success; and to effect his purpose, he employed a man well calculated to cope with such an antagonist. This was James Stewart, captain of the Royal Guard, and second son of Lord Ochiltree, who had already risen into great favour with the king, and was afterwards destined to act a noted part in the history of the country. Stewart had received a learned education; and from the principles of his father, and his near connexion with Knox, who had married his sister, was probably destined for the church. But his daring and ambitious character threw him into active life: he embraced the profession of arms, served as a soldier of fortune in the wars of France and Sweden, visited Russia, and afterwards returned to his own country, where he soon won the confidence of the young king and the Duke of Lennox, by his noble presence and elegant accomplishments. Beneath these lighter attractions, however, he concealed a mind utterly reckless and licentious in its principles, confident and courageous to excess, intolerant of the opinions of other men, and unscrupulous as to the means he adopted to raise himself into power.

To this man, then only beginning to develop these qualities, was committed the bold task of arraigning Morton; and to obtain complete proof of his guilt, it was arranged that Sir James Balfour, who was believed to have in his possession the bond for Darnley's murder, and who was himself a principal assassin, should come secretly from France and exhibit this paper with Morton's signature attached to it.

In this last scene of his life, the ex-regent exhibited the hereditary pride and courage of the house of Douglas.

He had been warned of the danger he incurred, and the storm which was about to burst over his head, two days before, when hunting with the king : but he derided it ; and on the last of December, the day on which he fell into the toils, took his place, as usual, at the council table, where the king presided. After some unimportant business, the usher suddenly entered and declared that Captain James Stewart was at the door, and earnestly craved an audience. The request was immediately granted ; and Stewart, advancing to the table, fell on his knees, and instantly accused Morton of the king's murder. " My duty to your highness," said he, addressing the king, " has brought me here to reveal a wickedness that has been too long obscured. It was that man," (pointing to the earl,) " now sitting at this table, a place he is unworthy to occupy, that conspired your royal father's death. Let him be committed for trial, and I shall make good my words."¹

Amidst the amazement and confusion occasioned by this sudden and bold impeachment, the only person unmoved was Morton himself. Rising from his seat, he cast a momentary and disdainful glance upon his accuser, and then firmly regarding the king, " I know not," he said, " by whom this informer has been set on, and it were easy for one of my rank to refuse all reply to so mean a person ; but I stand upon my innocence, I fear no trial. The rigour with which I have prosecuted all suspected of that murder is well known ; and when I have cleared myself, it will be for your majesty to determine what they deserve who have sent this perjured tool of theirs to accuse me !" These bitter terms Stewart threw back upon the earl with equal contempt and acrimony. " It is false, utterly false," he replied, " that any one has instigated me to make this accusation. A horror for the crime, and zeal for the safety of my sovereign, have been my only counsellors ; and as to his pretended zeal against the guilty, let me ask him,

where has he placed Archibald Douglas his cousin ? That most infamous of men, who was an actor in the tragedy, is now a senator, promoted to the highest seat of justice, and suffered to pollute that tribunal before which he ought to have been arraigned as the murderer of his prince."²

This scene had begun calmly ; but as these last words were uttered, Stewart had sprung upon his feet, and Morton laid his hand upon his sword, when Lords Lindsay and Cathcart threw themselves between them, and prevented a personal encounter.³ The king then commanded both to be removed ; and, after a brief consultation, the justice-clerk, who sat at the council table, having declared that, on a charge of treason, the accused must instantly be warded, Morton was first shut up in the palace, and after one day's interval, committed to the castle of Edinburgh. Even there, however, he was not deemed secure from a rescue ; and his enemies were not contented till they had lodged him within the strong fortress of Dumbarton, of which Lennox, his great enemy, was governor.⁴

On the same day that the ex-regent was committed, the council ordered his cousin, Archibald Douglas, to be seized ; and Hume of Manderston, with a party of horse, rode furiously all night to his castle of Morham : but Douglas had escaped, a few hours before, across the English border, having received warning from his friend the Laird of Lang-Niddry, who rode two horses to death in bringing him the news.⁵ Lennox and his faction, however, had made sure of their principal victim ; and all was now headlong haste to hurry on his trial, and have the tragedy completed, before any interruption could be made, or any succour arrive. Yet this was not

² Spottiswood, p. 310.

³ Harleian, 6999, fols. 3, 4, 5. Bowes to Walsingham, January 7, Berwick, 1580-1. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VI.

⁴ Calderwood, MS. Hist., British Museum, Ayscough, sub anno 1581, fol. 1115. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, January 25, 1580-1.

⁵ MS., Calderwood, sub anno 1581, fol. 1116.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, Jan. 1, 1580-1.

easily accomplished. The story of his seizure had effectually roused Elizabeth. Randolph was despatched, on the spur of the moment, to carry a violent remonstrance to the king; and Lord Hunsdon, her cousin, a proud and fiery soldier, received orders to raise the power of the north, and lead an army into Scotland.¹

But the envoy, on his arrival at Edinburgh,² found it more difficult to revive a party for the delivery of Morton than he had anticipated. Matters were there in so violent a state, and the English alliance so unpopular, that he dreaded assassination; and prayed Walsingham, who had addressed him as an envoy, to vouchsafe him the name of an ambassador, if it were merely for protection, and to save him from personal violence.³ On sounding the dispositions of the leading men, they appeared coldly affected. The Earl of Angus, indeed; Morton's nearest kinsman, was ready to peril all in the effort to save him; but he stood alone. The rest of the nobles were either banded with Lennox, or held themselves aloof, till Hunsdon's soldiers should be seen crossing, and not threatening to cross the Border, and till Randolph had begun to pay them in better coin than promises. They had been so often deceived by the artful diplomacy of the English queen,—she had already so frequently incited them to take arms, under a promise of assistance, and left them when it was too late to retreat,—that they were full of distrust and suspicion. Nor was the audience with the young king in any way more encouraging. James had been irritated on Randolph's first arrival, by his refusal to have any intercourse with his favourite Lennox;⁴ and when the envoy attempted to justify himself, and offered to prove, by

the production of an intercepted letter, that he was an agent of Rome and the house of Guise, and carried on a secret intelligence with the enemies of both kingdoms, the monarch answered, with much spirit, that Lennox was an honourable nobleman, his own near kinsman, and that the accusation was perfectly false. He had come from motives of affection to visit him; and as for the intercepted letter he spoke of, from the Bishop of Glasgow to the Pope, if any such existed, it was either a forgery, or a design of that prelate for Lennox's ruin. "The bishop's character," said James, "is well known; he is my declared traitor and rebel; a favourer and kinsman of the Hamiltons, the mortal foes of the house of Lennox; and no one would be more likely than Beaton to think his labour well bestowed, if, by his letters and intrigues, he might cause me to suspect and discard my kinsman, who has embraced the true religion, and is zealous for my honour and interest. On this head," he added, "the duke is anxious for the fullest investigation, and will refuse no manner of trial to justify himself from so false a slander; and as to the trial of Morton," he concluded, "my good sister cannot be more solicitous on that head than I myself. But what would she have? Can she complain that a man, accused in my own presence of the murder of my father, has been imprisoned till the evidence be collected against him? or is it reasonable to be angry because the day of trial is not fixed, when she is aware that Archibald Douglas, a principal witness, has fled into England, and that, till the Queen of England delivers him up, Morton cannot possibly be arraigned?"⁵

To all this Randolph had little to reply; and every day convinced him more deeply than the preceding, that Morton's fate was sealed. Elizabeth, indeed, had at first talked proudly and authoritatively of her determination to save him; and her ministers and soldiers borrowed her tone. Walsing-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, January 8, 1580-1.

² January 18, 1580-1.

³ MS., State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, January 22, 1580-1, Sunday. He arrived in Edinburgh on Wednesday the 18th January 1580-1.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, January 22, 1580-1, Edinburgh, Sunday.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, the King of Scots and his Council's Answer to Mr Randolph, February 7, 1580-1.

ham declared to Randolph, that if a hair of Morton's head were touched, it would cost the Queen of Scots her life.¹ Hunsdon addressed to the same ambassador a blustering epistle, anticipating his speedy invasion of Scotland, and full of threats against the "petty fellows" who were about the King of Scots.² Leicester, whose opinion ought to have had still greater weight, expressed himself in ominous and warning words: alluding to the dreadful fate of Darnley, "Let that young king take heed," said he. "If he prove unthankful to his faithful servants so soon, he cannot long tarry in that soil. Let the speed of his predecessors be his warning."³ Bowes declared that, if Lennox were permitted to triumph, and Morton to fall, the quarrel would be no longer about the trifles of the Borders, but the right to the crown; in which Scotland would be assisted by France and Spain, and fortified by a large party within England:⁴ and the wise Burghley, in his "Directions" to Randolph, urged the necessity of immediate action, to save Scotland from the domination of a concealed Papist, (so he described Lennox,) who, whatever he might pretend to the contrary, had been permitted by the court of Rome to dissemble his religion.⁵

But this energy was short-lived, and spent itself in words. Hunsdon, after all his threats, protracted his levies; not an English soldier crossed the Border; and no decided support or supplies of money could be extracted from the caution and parsimony of the English queen; whilst, on the part of Lennox and his adherents, all was vigour and warlike preparation. The whole force of the realm was summoned to be in readiness to resist the English army. Bands of "waged

soldiers" (so termed to distinguish them from the feudal militia of the country, who served without pay) were enlisted, and added to the ordinary guard about the king's person; and the three estates assembled to vote supplies for the exigencies of the expected war with England.

Before this parliament Randolph appeared and made his last great effort to bring about the deliverance of Morton, and overthrow the power of Lennox, by open negotiation and remonstrance. He spoke for two hours: insisted with much earnestness on the benefits to be derived from the friendship of his royal mistress; described, in glowing terms, the dangers to be apprehended from Lennox, whom he denounced as an agent of France and Rome; and produced an intercepted letter from the Bishop of Ross, to prove his allegations. All these exertions, however, came too late, and were utterly unsuccessful. Lennox denied the charge, and demanded the fullest investigation. The parliament promised forty thousand pounds to support the preparations against England; daily rumours of war, and whisperings of the intrigues and conspiracies which were fomented by the English diplomatist, agitated and inflamed the country; and at last, as Randolph himself described it, "every day bred a new disorder; men began to be stirring in all parts; the ambassador grew odious, his death suspected, and the court in a manner desperate."⁶

These suspicions of conspiracies were not without foundation; for, from the moment of his arrival, Randolph had kept in his eye the third article in his instructions, which was, to raise a faction against Lennox, and employ force, either in seizing his person, or putting him to death in some open attack, if more conciliatory measures failed.⁷ It was hoped that in this way the party in the interest of England might secure the person of

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, February 9, 1580-1.

² Ibid., Hunsdon to Randolph, February 3, 1580-1.

³ Ibid., Leicester to Randolph, February 15, 1580-1.

⁴ Ibid., Bowes to Leicester, Berwick, March 14, 1580-1.

⁵ Ibid. Directions sent to Mr Randolph, wholly in Burghley's hand, February 17, 1580-1.

⁶ MS., State-paper Office, Mr Randolph's Negotiation in Scotland.

⁷ MS. Instructions to Mr Randolph, January 6, 1580-1. Also Memorial for Secret Objects. Caligula, C. vi. fol. 104-6.

the young king, and remove from him those obnoxious ministers who persuaded him to throw himself into the arms of France, and to seek the liberty of the imprisoned queen. The great advocates for this plan were Sir Robert Bowes, Lord Hunsdon, Lord Huntingdon, and the Earl of Angus; but they differed somewhat as to the best mode of proceeding. Bowes seemed to have the least scruples as to employing force for the separating James from his favourite. In a letter to Walsingham or Burghley,¹ written shortly after Randolph's arrival, he informed his correspondent that the Scottish nobles were drawing to an association; and that, amid the pageants with which the king and Lennox were then recreating the court, "a strange masque might be, perhaps, seen at Holyrood," which would check the triumph of the favourite. Hunsdon, whose fiery temper on no occasion brooked much delay, recommended martial measures; and assured the English secretary that Lennox must look for his dismissal to France, or to "something worse."² Huntingdon, a nobleman of the highest honour in these dark times, assured Randolph, that any attempt to restore English ascendancy by negotiation would be fruitless; that open war must be deprecated; and that to get out of their difficulties by "murder" would be worst of all: but he added that he could see no objection to another method, which had been already resorted to with success, and that more than once, in Scottish history. "Why may not some of the nobility, assisted by England, say to the king, 'Your Grace is young; you cannot judge for yourself, and must be rescued from this French stranger, who abuses your confidence;' and then," he added, "if Lennox resisted and took arms, let them unarm him, if they can, and let our royal mistress assist them."³

¹ The address is lost. MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 113. Bowes to —, February 7, 1580-1, Berwick.

² Harleian, 6999, fol. 203. Hunsdon to Walsingham, February 6, 1580-1.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Huntingdon to Randolph, March 21, 1580-1.

Amidst these various and conflicting opinions, Randolph laboured busily, and with the ardour of a man in his native element; so that at last a band or association was "packed up," to use the common phrase of the times, amongst the nobles; and Bowes informed Leicester of the intentions of the conspirators, in a letter which shews, when taken in connexion with a communication addressed the day after by Walsingham to Lord Hunsdon, that the design of the nobles was to seize the person of the king, and secure, or perhaps murder, Lennox. "Albeit," said Bowes, "the levy of the forces newly assembled in Edinburgh and elsewhere, and the planting them about the king, to guard his person against suspected surprise or violence, doth greatly threaten the stay or defeat of the purposes intended, whereof I know your lordship is advertised; yet I am in good hope that, if any opportunity be found, the parties associated will, with good courage, attempt the matter." To this, Elizabeth, who knew and directed all, replied, that she would hear of no violence being offered to the king's person; but as for D'Aubigny, she could be content he were surprised, provided it could be executed when he was found separated from his young master.⁴ The extent of violence or bloodshed sanctioned under this word "surprised," cannot be precisely fixed; but to those who knew the character of the Scottish nobles of those days, and none knew it better than the English queen, it conveyed, no doubt, an emphatic meaning.

The conspirators, thus encouraged, completed their arrangements. They succeeded in corrupting some of the royal household; by their connivance, forged keys for the king's private apartments were made; and they thus hoped to enter the palace, seize the young monarch, put Lennox, Argyle, and Montrose to death, and send

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, March 14, 1580-1, Bowes to Leicester. Also MS., British Museum, Harleian, 6999, fol. 479. Original draft, Walsingham to Hunsdon, March 15, 1580-1.

James to England.¹ But Lennox, when on the very point of being cut off, was saved by an unexpected discovery; and Morton, when his prison began to be cheered by the near prospect of escape, found himself more hopelessly situated than before. The chief actors in the association for his rescue were the Earls of Angus and Mar. With Angus, Randolph had arranged all in nightly meetings, held sometimes in the fields, sometimes at Dalkeith. The Laird of Whittingham, a Douglas, and brother to the noted Archibald Douglas, was a principal conspirator, and intrusted with their most secret intentions; and four confidential servants of Morton, named Fleck, or Affleck, Nesbit, Reid, and Jerdan, were principal agents in the plot, and knew all its ramifications. Lord Hunsdon, who had a high admiration of Angus, was, as we have seen, deeply implicated: his forces were in readiness to advance from Berwick into Scotland; and he only waited for the signal which was to be the news of the king's seizure, when Lennox, receiving some hint which awakened his suspicion, seized Douglas of Whittingham, threatened him with the rack, and obtained a revelation of the whole. Morton's servants, Fleck, Nesbit, Reid, and Jerdan, were instantly arrested and put to the torture. Angus was banished beyond the Spey; Randolph, whose intrigues were laid bare, fled precipitately to Berwick, after having been nearly slain by a shot fired into his study;² and Elizabeth, disgusted by the treachery of Whittingham, and the utter failure of the plot against Lennox, commanded Hunsdon to dismiss his forces, recalled Randolph, and abandoned Morton to his fate.³

¹ MS., Harleian, copy of the time, Randolph to Hunsdon, March 20, 1580-1.

² MS., State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, March 25, 1581. Randolph affects to "suspend" his judgment of the truth of all this confession of Whittingham till further trial. There seems to be little doubt that he knew all the particulars of the plot previous to the confession, and bore a principal part in arranging it.

³ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VII.

This, it was now evident, could not be long averted. His enemies were powerful and clamorous against him. Captain James Stewart, the accuser of the ex-regent, had openly declared, if they by whom he had been urged to this daring enterprise did not make an end of the old tyrant, he would soon make an end of *them*.⁴ The confession of Whittingham, and of Morton's confidential servants, had furnished his enemies with evidence sufficient to bring him to the scaffold;⁵ and although Angus, Randolph, and Hunsdon still continued their plots, it was found impossible to carry them into execution. One by one the various earls and barons, whose assistance had been bought by Elizabeth, dropped off, and made their peace with the stronger party;⁶ till at last Morton was left alone, and nothing remained to be done but to sacrifice the victim.

For this purpose Stewart, his accuser, and Montrose were commissioned to bring him from Dumbarton to the capital. In those dark days many prophetic warnings hung over ancient houses; and among the rest was one which predicted that the bloody heart, the emblem of the house of Douglas, would fall by Arran. This saying Morton affected to despise; for the Earl of Arran was dead, and the Hamiltons, his enemies, in whose family this title was hereditary, were now banished and broken men. But Stewart, his implacable foe, had recently procured from the king the gift of the vacant earldom, though the news of his promotion had never reached the captive in his prison at Dumbarton. When Morton, therefore, read the name of Arran in the commission, he started, exclaiming, "Arran! who is that? the Earl of Arran is dead."—"Not so," said the attendant; "that title is now held by Captain James Stewart."

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, January 11, 1580-1, Bowes to Lord Burghley and Sir Fr. Walsingham.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, March 25, 1581.

⁶ MS., Harleian, 6999, fol. 527. Randolph to Hunsdon, Edinburgh, March 23, 1580-1.

“And is it so?” said he, the prediction flashing across his memory: “then, indeed, all is over; and I know what I must look for.”¹

Yet, although hopeless as to the result, nothing could be more calm or undaunted than the temper in which he met it. During his long imprisonment, he had expressed contrition for his sinful courses; deplored the many crimes into which ambition and the insatiable love of power had plunged him; and sought for rest in the consolations of religion, and the constant study of the Holy Scriptures. At the same time, his preparations for the worst had not prevented him from taking as active a part against his enemies as his captivity would allow.

He was brought to trial on the 1st of June, five months after his arrest; and such was still either the lingering dread of his power, or the terror of some attempt at rescue, that the whole town was in arms. Two companies of soldiers were placed at the Cross, two bands above the Tolbooth; whilst the citizens, armed also, and with another body of troops, filled the principal street, for the purpose of conducting him from his lodging to the Tolbooth, where the trial took place. His indictment contained twelve heads of accusation, or “*dictay;*” but the paper has not been preserved; and this is the less material, as the proceedings had scarcely begun, when a letter from the king was presented, commanding the jury to confine their attention solely to the most important charge, his accession to the murder of the late king, his father. On this point, absolute and direct proof might not have been easily procured; for it turned out that Sir James Balfour either did not possess, or would not produce, the bond for Darnley’s murder. But Morton’s own defence supplied this defect: for although he denied that he had ever procured, or given his consent to the death of Darnley, he distinctly admitted that he knew the murder was

to be committed, and had concealed it; upon which confession the jury found him guilty.

The terms in which their sentence was embodied were the same as those still employed in Scotland. It declared him “convicted of counsel, concealing, and being art and part of the king’s murder;” upon hearing which last words read aloud, the earl, who had maintained the greatest calmness and temper during the trial, became deeply agitated. “Art and part!” said he, with great vehemence, and striking the table repeatedly with a little baton or staff which he usually carried—“art and part! God knoweth the contrary.” It is evident that he drew the distinction between an active contrivance and approval, and a passive knowledge and concealment of the plot for Darnley’s assassination.

On the morning of the day on which he suffered, some of the leading ministers of the Kirk, with whom he had been much at variance on the subject of Episcopacy, breakfasted with him in the prison; and a long and interesting conference took place, of which the particulars have been preserved in a narrative drawn up by those who were present.² It is difficult for any one who reads this account, and who is acquainted with the dark and horrid crimes which stained the life of Morton, not to be painfully struck with the disproportion between his expressions of contrition, and his certain anticipations of immediate glory and felicity. The compunction for his many crimes—murder, tyranny, avarice, cruelty, lust, and all the sins which were the ministers of his exorbitant ambition and pride—is so slight, that we feel perplexed as to the sincerity of a repentance which seems to sit so easily. He speaks of the murder of Riccio, or, as he terms it, “the slaughter of Davie,” in which he acted so prominent a part, without one expression of regret; and appears to have lost almost every recollection of his former life, in his prospect of in

¹ Spottiswood, p. 313.

² Bannatyne’s Memorial, Bannatyne Club edition, p. 317.

stant admission into the society of the blessed. Yet all may have been, nay, let us hope all was, sincere; and whilst it is vain to speculate upon a state of mind known only to Him who sees the heart, allowance must be made for the character of an age familiar with blood; for the peculiar, and almost ultra-Calvinistic, theology of the divines who ministered to him in his last moments; and the possibility of inaccuracy in the narrative itself, which was not read over to him before his death. In speaking of the assassination of the king, he distinctly repeated his admissions made at the trial; affirming that he, in common with many others, knew that Darnley was to be cut off, but did not dare to forewarn him; and adding, that the queen was the contriver of the whole plot.

These conferences took place on the day in which he suffered; and his friends amongst the clergy had scarcely left him, when his keeper entered his room, and desired him to come forth to the scaffold. He appeared surprised, and observed that, having been so much troubled that day with worldly matters, he had hoped that one night at least would have been allowed him to have advised ripely with his God. "But, my lord," said the keeper, "they will not wait, and all things are ready."—"If it be so," answered he, "I praise God I am ready also;" and after a short prayer, he passed down to the gate of the palace to go to the scaffold. Here another interruption took place; for Arran, his mortal enemy, was waiting on the steps, and requested him to tarry till his confession, which had been made to the ministers, had been written down, and brought to him for his signature. But this reimmersion into worldly affairs he entreated to be spared. "Bethink you, my lord," said he, "that I have far other things now to advise upon. I am about to die; I must prepare for my God. Ask me not to write now; all these good men" (pointing to the ministers) "can testify what I have spoken in that matter." With this Arran professed himself satisfied: but his importunity

was not at an end; for he added, that Morton must be reconciled to him before he proceeded further. To this the earl willingly agreed; observing that now was no time to reckon quarrels, and that he forgave him and all, as he himself hoped for forgiveness. He then proceeded to the scaffold, which he ascended with a firm step; and turning to the people repeated, shortly, his confession of the foreknowledge of the king's murder, only suppressing the name of his near relative, Mr Archibald Douglas. He declared that he died in the profession of the gospel as it was at that day taught and established in Scotland; and exhorted the people, if they hoped for the favour of Heaven, to hold fast the same. Mr James Lawson, one of the ministers, then prayed aloud; and during this act of devotion, Morton, who had thrown himself, with his face on the ground, before the block on which he was to suffer, was observed to be deeply affected. In his agitation, his whole frame was convulsed with sighs and sobs bursting from his bosom; and his body rebounded from the earth on which he lay along. On rising up, however, his face was calm and cheerful; he shook his friends by the hand, bidding them farewell with many expressions of kindness; and having declined to have his hands bound, knelt down and laid his neck upon the block. At this awful moment, Mr James Lawson, stooping forward to his ear, read some verses from the Scripture, which Morton repeated with a firm voice. As he pronounced the words, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" the axe descended, and the imperfect sentence died upon the lips, which quivered and were silent for ever.¹ The execution took place about four o'clock on the evening of Friday the 2d of June. It was remarked that Fernyhirst, who was known to have

¹ MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1156. Morton's head was fixed on the Tolbooth, on the highest stone of the gable towards the public street. There is a fine original picture of the Regent Morton at Dalmahoy, near Edinburgh, the seat of the present Earl of Morton. It has been engraved by Lodge.

been acquainted with the murder of the king, stood in a window opposite the scaffold. He was recognised by a conspicuous feature in his dress—his large ruffles; and seemed to take delight in the spectacle. The people also remarked that Lord Seton and his two sons had taken great care to secure a good view of all that passed, by pulling down a stair which would have intercepted their view of the scaffold.¹

On the day after Morton suffered, George Binning, a servant of Archibald Douglas, was executed for his participation in the murder of the king. The confession of this accomplice threw some additional light on this dark story. He affirmed that his master, Archibald Douglas, who was then an adherent of the Earl of Bothwell, was present at the deed, and, in his haste to leave the spot, lost one of his slippers; that, when his master came home, his clothes were full of clay and soil, occasioned, no doubt, by the explosion; and that, in retreating from the scene of the murder, he (Binning) encountered, at the foot of a narrow lane near the spot, certain "musselled men," meaning men who had disguised themselves by muffling their faces in their cloaks; one of whom, as he conjectured by his voice, was a brother of Sir James Balfour.²

The death of Morton was followed, as was to be expected, by the concentration of the whole power of the state in the hands of the Earl of Lennox and Captain Stewart, now Earl of Arran. This necessarily led to the revival of the influence of France, and to renewed intrigues by the friends of the Catholic faith and the supporters of the imprisoned queen. The prospects of the Protestant lords, and of the more zealous ministers of the Kirk, were proportionably overclouded; the faction in the interest of England was thrown into despair, and reports of the most gloomy kind began to circulate through the country. It was said that religion was on the point of being

altered; that the king would marry a princess of the house of Lorraine; that the Duke of Guise had already written to him in the most friendly terms, and now for the first time had condescended to call him king.³ The conduct of Lennox was calculated to confirm rather than mitigate these suspicions. He professed, indeed, an earnest desire to maintain amicable relations with England; and had written to this effect to the Earl of Leicester, warning him against Archibald Douglas, who was now in England, and laboured to embroil the two kingdoms.⁴ But he had forgotten entirely his friendly professions to the Presbyterians. The ministers of the Kirk, who had congratulated themselves as the instruments of his conversion, were treated with coldness; and it was soon discovered that he had warmly espoused the king's opinions with regard to Episcopacy, and was ready to second, to his utmost ability, the efforts of the monarch for its complete establishment in his dominions.

Meanwhile the new Earl of Arran was not neglectful of his interests, and advanced rapidly in power and presumption. Soon after the execution of Morton, he appeared before the privy-council, entered into a detail of his proceedings against that nobleman, lamented the necessity he had been under of employing torture to procure evidence, and demanded and obtained an act of approval from the king, which characterised his whole conduct as honourable, and assured him that at no future period should it be called in question.⁵ His next step was an act of such open profligacy, as to incense and scandalise the whole country. He lived in habits of familiar friendship with the Earl of March, and had been under deep obligations to him; but he employed the oppor-

³ MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Burghley, August 18, 1581. Also B.C., same to same, September 31, 1581. Also MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Oct. 3, 1581.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Lennox to Leicester, October 7, 1581, Lithgow.

⁵ Original Record of Privy-council, in the Register-house, Edinburgh, June 3, 1581.

¹ MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1156.

² Ibid.

tunities such intimacy gave him to seduce the affections of the Countess of March, a woman of great beauty; and so completely succeeded in depraving her mind, that she brought an action of divorce against her husband, on a ground which, in this day, none but the most abandoned could plead. The suit was successful, the decree of divorce pronounced, and Arran married the countess, whose situation at that moment proclaimed her either a liar or an adulteress. It affords a shocking picture of the manners of the times, that the young king appears to have countenanced this proceeding. Nor was this all. James determined to grant new honours to those who had assisted him in the overthrow of Morton: Lennox was made a duke;¹ Captain Stewart, who had already received a gift of the earldom of Arran, was invested in that dignity with great solemnity; the Earl of March received the earldom of Orkney; Lord Ruthven that of Gowrie; and Lord Maxwell, one of the most powerful nobles of that time, became Earl of Morton.

Parliament now assembled, and the sanction of this supreme court was given to all those measures lately passed in favour of Lennox and Arran. Indeed, it could scarcely be expected that any would dare to oppose them; for James had sent intimation to the Earls of Mar, Eglinton, and Glencairn, with the Lords Lindsay, Boyd, Herries, and Ochiltree, that he would dispense with their presence on this occasion;² and none, probably, attended but those who were favourable to the court. The adherents of the late Earl of Morton were pronounced rebels, and their estates confiscated. Amongst these, the principal were the Earl of Angus, Archibald Douglas of Whittingham, James Douglas, prior of Pluscardine, and James Douglas of Pittendreich, two natural sons of the Regent Morton; Douglas of Parkhead, and

¹ Douglas, vol. ii. p. 99. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 34. Bannatyne edition. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1156, states he was proclaimed duke on the 27th August 1581.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 18, 1581.

Archibald Douglas, constable of the castle of Edinburgh. In the same parliament, Lennox, who believed his influence now to be all-powerful, exerted himself to procure the pardon of Sir James Balfour, who had recently done him good service in the overthrow of Morton. But he was disappointed; for James refused his request, and pointed to those acts of parliament by which it was declared that no person guilty of the king his father's murder, should ever be restored.³ At the same meeting of the estates, the statutes were confirmed which protected the Reformed religion; some enactments were introduced for the regulation of the coinage, against the exportation of wool, and other acts directed against that excess in apparel amongst the middle and lower classes, and expensive and superfluous banquets, which marked the progress of the country in wealth and refinement, and had excited the jealousy of the higher nobility.

It is now necessary to turn for a moment to the Scottish queen in her imprisonment. It was a miserable circumstance in the fate of this unfortunate princess, that any successes of her friends generally brought along with them an increase of rigour and jealousy upon the part of her inexorable rival. This increase, on the other hand, as surely led to more determined efforts for her delivery; and thus during the thirteen years for which she had now continued a captive, her health had been shattered, and her spirits broken, by those alternations of hope and fear,—those fluctuations of ardent expectation, or bitter disappointment, which must have destroyed even the healthiest and most buoyant constitution. Her condition about this time was so feeble, that she had lost the use of her limbs, and was carried in a chair or litter, by her servants. She besought Elizabeth, in pathetic terms, for the favour of a coach, that she might enjoy a drive in the park of Sheffield castle, where she was con-

³ MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Thomas Selby to Mr Thomas Foster, November 29, 1581.

fined; she requested the additional attendance of two female servants and two men-servants, which her sickness demanded; and she entreated to have passports for the Lady Lethington and Lord Seton, in whose society she might find some alleviation of her solitude. But, although Castelnau, the French ambassador, seconded these requests by the most earnest remonstrance, the English queen was deaf to his entreaties, and resisted the application.¹

This cold and unrelenting conduct could not fail to make a deep impression upon Mary; and, in a moment of resentment and excitation, she had determined to resign her rights as Queen of Scots, and her claims upon the crown of England, into the hands of her son, with an earnest hope that he would invade that realm, and, assisted by the Roman Catholic party abroad, and Elizabeth's discontented subjects at home, establish his rights, and overwhelm her oppressor. But the return of calmer consideration shewed the madness of such a scheme; and her anxiety for the amicable recognition of the rights of her son to the English crown, banished the suggestions of personal resentment. In a memorial presented by Mary about this time to Elizabeth and her parliament, she requested to be heard, by deputies whom she would appoint, upon the subject of her title and pretensions.² It was not, she added, on her own account that she suggested this. Continued affliction had brought on a premature age; sorrow had extinguished ambition; and, with her shattered frame, it would be ridiculous to expect to survive Elizabeth. But she felt the natural anxiety of a mother to secure the rights of her child: and she entreated her sister of England to agree to her petition, and to recognise the undoubted title of her son, as the most certain means of promoting settled peace, and securing their mutual security.

¹ Addition aux Mem. de Castelnau, p. 519. Chalmers's Life of Mary, vol. i. pp. 384, 388.

² Murdin, p. 367

This sensible memorial experienced the same fate as her former petition: it made no impression upon the Queen of England, or her ministers; and Mary, defeated in her moderate desires, was compelled to embrace more determined measures, and to throw herself entirely into the arms of France. This led to a new project, known by the name of "The Association," and which appears to have originated about this time. It was proposed to the young king that, in order to have his title to the Scottish throne recognised by the powers of Europe, none of whom, with the exception of England, had yet publicly given him the name of king, he should resign the crown to his mother, under the condition that she should retransmit it to him, and retire from all the active duties of the government. But before pursuing this scheme, which led ultimately to important consequences, it is necessary to attend to the state of the Church, and its violent collision with the crown.

The struggle between Episcopacy, which had been originally established at the time of the Reformation, and the Presbyterian form of church government, was now assuming every day a more determined and obstinate form. The young king, with his ministers and favourites, Lennox and Arran, and a large proportion of the nobility, supported Episcopacy. The ministers of the Kirk, and the great body of the burghers, and middle and lower classes of the people, were zealously attached to the Presbyterian model; and considered the office of a bishop as anti-scriptural, and a remnant of Popery. In a General Assembly, held some time previous to this, the "Platform" of ecclesiastical government, drawn up by Andrew Melvil, had been ratified by a majority of the ministers, and received the solemn sanction of the Church, under the title of "The Second Book of Discipline."³ Under these conflicting circumstances, the Duke of Lennox, whose influence with the

³ Calderwood's History, pp. 97, 102, convened April 20, 1581. Confessions of Faith, vol. ii. p. 807.

young king gave him an almost absolute power in the disposal of patronage, appointed Mr Robert Montgomery to the vacant bishopric of Glasgow. It was notorious to all, that this was a collusive and simoniacal transaction; for Montgomery resigned the temporalities of the see to the duke, and was contented to receive a small annual stipend out of its revenues. But the clergy, at first waving this objection, pronounced a high censure upon Montgomery, and interdicted him from accepting a bishopric. He remonstrated, and was supported by the king and his council, who contended that, as Episcopacy had never been abolished by the three estates, no illegal act had been committed.

The General Assembly of the Church soon after was convened in the capital; and as some private intelligence had been sent to Scotland of the intended "Association" between the imprisoned queen and the king her son, this ecclesiastical convention met in a state of much excitement.¹ It was known that various missionary priests were covertly intriguing in the country; that George Douglas had arrived on a mission from France, charged with secret despatches from the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, her agents in that realm; and great dread was entertained of Lennox's increasing influence over the mind of the young king. Determined measures, therefore, were adopted by the Church. Articles against Montgomery were drawn up, which condemned, in strong terms, his life, conversation, and opinions; and although, upon investigation, many faults objected to him turned out to be frivolous and unfounded, other matters were proved, which, it was contended, utterly incapacitated him for the office which he had accepted. He received an injunction, therefore, to continue in his ministry at Stirling; and, under pain of the highest censures, to abandon all thoughts of the bishopric.

During these transactions, Elizabeth, who had become alarmed on the subject of Scotland, and dreaded the

¹ Calderwood, p. 118.

preponderating influence of Lennox and Arran, despatched Captain Nicolas Arrington, an able officer of the garrison at Berwick, on a mission into that country. He was instructed to use his utmost efforts to persuade the king to continue in amicable relations with England; to sow, if possible, by some secret practice, a division between the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran; and to expose the devices of France and Spain for the overthrow of religion, and the resumption of power by the Scottish queen.² It had been the advice of Sir Robert Bowes, in a letter addressed to Burghley, that every means should be adopted to increase some jealousies which, owing to the pride and intolerance of Arran, had arisen between him and the duke. But after every effort to "blow the coals,"³ as he expressed it, these proud rivals became convinced that their safest policy was to forget their differences, and unite against their common enemies. A reconciliation, accordingly, took place;⁴ and Lennox, strong in the continued attachment of the king, and the new friendship of Arran, determined to concentrate his whole strength against that faction of the Kirk which opposed themselves to Episcopacy, and had threatened his bishop with deposition.

At this moment secret information of a threatening nature arrived from France. The reports regarding the progress of "The Association" between the queen-mother and her son were confirmed. It was said that Lord Arbroath, the head of the great house of Hamilton, now in banishment, was to be restored by French influence, under the condition that the "mass" should return along with him; and Mr John Durie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, sounded a fearful note of alarm, in a sermon which he delivered in the High Church of the city. The king, he said, had

² State-paper Office, October 26, 1581, Instructions for N. Arrington, sent into Scotland. Copy.

³ MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 18, 1581.

⁴ Historie of James the Sext, p. 186.

been moved by certain courtiers, who now ruled all at their will, to send a private message to the King of France and the Duke of Guise, and to seek his mother's blessing. He knew this, he declared, from the very man who was employed in the message—George Douglas, Mary's sworn servant; and he painted in strong colours the deplorable effects which might be anticipated from such a coalition. It was proposed, in these dark counsels, that the king should resign the crown to his mother, and she convey it again to him, with an assurance that he should then be acknowledged as king by France, and by the powers of Europe, which, up to this time, had refused him the royal title. And what must inevitably follow from all this? If the transaction were completed, it would be argued that the establishment of religion, and all other public transactions since the coronation, were null; that the king's friends were traitors, and their adversaries his only true subjects. After the sermon, a remarkable conference took place between the Earls of Argyle and Gowrie, and the ministers, Durie, Lawson, and Davison, in the council-house. On being pressed as to the French intrigues, Argyle confessed that he had gone too far; but affirmed that, if he saw anything intended against religion, he would forsake his friends, and oppose it to his utmost. To Gowrie, Davison, the minister of Liberton, in alluding to the murder of Riccio, used a still stronger argument. "If things," said he, "go forward as they are intended, your head, my lord, will pay for Davie's slaughter. But Scottish nobles now are utterly unworthy of the place they hold: they would not, in other times, have suffered the king to lie alone at Dalkeith with a stranger, whilst the whole realm is going to confusion; and yet the matter," they significantly added, "might be reformed well enough with quietness, if the noblemen would do their duty."¹

Nor were these warnings and de-

¹ MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1172.

nunciations confined to the nobility. The young king, when sitting in his private chamber in the palace of Stirling, received an admonition quite as solemn as any delivered to his subjects. Mr John Davison, along with Duncanson the royal chaplain, and Mr Peter Young, entered the apartment; and Davison, after pointing out the dreadful state of the country, exhorted him to put away those evil counsellors who were so fast bringing ruin upon the commonweal and his own soul. "My liege," said he, "at this present there are three jewels in this realm precious to all good men—Religion, the Commonweal, and your Grace's person. Into what a horrible confusion the two first have fallen, all men are witness; but as to the third, your grace hath need to beware, not only of the common hypocrites and flatterers, but more especially of two sorts of men. First, such as opposed themselves to your grace in your minority: whereby they have committed offences for which they must yet answer to the laws; and, therefore, must needs fear the king. Remember the saying, '*Multis terribilis, caveto multos.*' The second sort are those who are conjured enemies to religion. If," he concluded, "your grace would call to you such godly men as I could name, they would soon shew you whom they think to be included in these two ranks." It had been arranged beforehand that, should the young king exhibit any desire to profit by this counsel, Davison was to name the Lairds of Dun, Lundie, and Braid, with Mr Robert Pont and Mr James Lawson, two of the leading ministers; but James, after hearing the exordium, and observing hurriedly that it was good counsel, started off from the subject, and broke up the interview.²

These scenes of alarm and admonition were followed by a violent attempt of Montgomery to possess himself of the bishopric, in which he entered the church at Glasgow, accompanied by a band of the royal guard, and in virtue of a charge ad-

² MS., Calderwood, British Museum, fol. 1172.

dressed by the king to that presbytery, endeavoured to expel the established minister from the pulpit, and to occupy his place. This was resisted by the Kirk; and the ministers of the presbytery of Glasgow were in consequence summoned before the council;¹ but they defended themselves with the greatest courage, and when pressed by the king, declined the judgment of the sovereign or his judges in a matter not of a civil but of a purely spiritual nature. Lawson, Durie, Andrew Hay, and a large body of the ministers and elders from Edinburgh, Dalkeith, and Linlithgow, accompanied them to Stirling; and when the king insisted that they should receive Montgomery, and warned them of the fatal consequences of a refusal, he was boldly reminded by Durie, that such intemperate proceedings would only lead to the excommunication of the man whom he favoured.² This threat, and the preparations for carrying it into immediate execution, alarmed the object of the quarrel himself; and the submission of Montgomery to the jurisdiction and sentence of the Kirk, led to a temporary cessation of the controversy.

This lull, however, proved exceeding brief, and was soon followed by a more determined collision between the antagonist principles of Presbyterianism and Episcopacy. The Kirk at this time possessed, amongst its ministers, some men of distinguished learning, and of the greatest courage: Durie, Lawson, Craig, Lindsay, Andrew Melville, Thomas Smeton, Pont, Davison, and many others, presided over its councils, and formed a spiritual conclave which, in the infallibility they claimed, and the obedience they demanded, was a hierarchy in everything but the name. Eloquent, intrepid, and indefatigable, they had

gained the affections of the lower classes of the people, and were supported also by the increasing influence of the burghs and the commercial classes. Animated by such feelings, wielding such powers, and backed by such an influence, it was not to be expected that they would be easily put down. The great cause of Episcopacy, on the other hand, was supported by the young king, who was himself no contemptible theologian, by the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Arran, and a large portion of the old nobility. Abroad, it looked to the sympathy and assistance of France; and as the whole hopes of the imprisoned queen, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in England, rested on Lennox and his friends, they were inclined to strengthen his hands in every possible way. The power of this party had recently been shewn by the destruction of Morton, which they carried through with a high hand, against the whole influence of England and the Kirk; and, flushed by this success, they resolved to renew the battle with the Presbyterian party, in the case of the Bishop of Glasgow, which, however insulated or insignificant it might appear at first sight, really involved the establishment or destruction of Episcopacy. Montgomery, a weak man, and wholly under the influence of Lennox, was easily persuaded to retract his submission, and repeat his attempts to possess himself of the bishopric; whilst at this moment the feelings of the ministers were goaded to the highest pitch of jealousy and resentment, by the arrival of a messenger from the Duke of Guise: ostensibly, he came with a present of horses to the king; but it was suspected that more was intended than mere courtesy. The person who brought this gift was Signor Paul, the duke's master-stabler, and, as was asserted, one of the most active and remorseless murderers at the massacre of St Bartholomew.³ It was

¹ MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1189. "This Seignor Paul was a famous murtherer at the massacre at Paris. No fitter man could be sent to make pastime the king."

² April 13, 1582.

² Calderwood MS., fol. 1174. Montgomery, incensed against Andrew Hay, one of the ministers, threatened to bring him to justice, as art and part in foreknowing and concealing the late king's murder. The only ground of the charge was that Mr Andrew Hay was uncle to the Laird of Tallo, (Hay,) who was executed for the murder.

scarcely to be expected that this should be tamely borne; and John Durie, the minister of Edinburgh, instantly rode to Kinneil, Arran's castle, where the king had determined to receive Guise's envoy. Meeting Signor Paul in the garden, the minister hastily drew his cap over his eyes, declaring he would not pollute them by looking on the devil's ambassador; and turning to the king, rebuked him sharply for receiving gifts from so odious a quarter. "Is it with the Guise," said he, "that your grace will interchange presents; with that cruel murderer of the saints? Beware, my liege, I implore you," he continued, "beware with whom you ally yourself in marriage; and remember John Knox's last words unto your highness; remember that good man's warning, that so long as you maintained God's holy gospel, and kept your body unpolluted, you would prosper. Listen not, then, to those ambassadors of the devil, who are sent hither to allure you from your religion."¹ To this indignant sally, James, overawed by the vehement tone of the remonstrant, quietly answered, "that his body was pure; and that he would have no woman for his wife who did not fear God and love the Evangell."²

From Kinneil, Durie returned to Edinburgh, where his zeal flamed up to the highest pitch; and, transforming the pulpit, as was the practice of those times, into a political rostrum for the discussion of the measures of the government, he exposed the intrigues of Lennox, the schemes of the queen-mother, and the profligacy of the court, in such cutting and indignant terms, that he was immediately summoned before the council, and ordered to quit the city.³ The strictest injunctions, at the same time, were directed to the provost and magistrates to carry this sentence of banishment

¹ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1189, and MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, Berwick, May 15, 1582. The interview between Durie and the king at Kinneil took place on the 11th May. MS., Calderwood.

² Ibid., MS., Calderwood, fol. 1189.

³ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VIII.

into execution under pain of treason.⁴ Lennox's party, at this moment, was described by the Laird of Carmichael, (a Scottish gentleman employed to transmit secret information to Walsingham,) as guiding all at court. Its ranks, as he informed the English secretary, embraced Arran, a great persecutor of the preachers, Huntly, Seton, Ogilvy, the Prior Maitland, (this was the younger brother of the famous Secretary Lethington,) Balfour, Robert Melvil, Mr David Makgill, and one Mr Henry Keir. These, he added, were all Papists.⁵ But Carmichael himself, probably a rigid Presbyterian, was little disposed to make any distinction between those who supported Episcopacy, and the friends of the Church of Rome. Yet it must be remembered that the reported intrigues between the court of Spain and the duke, with the secret negotiations of the Jesuits for the association of the queen-mother with her son in the government, gave him no little countenance in the assertion; and the vigour with which Lennox pushed forward his measures against the Kirk, seemed to indicate a very formidable combination of forces. Undismayed, however, by the attack of their adversaries, the party of the Kirk only roused themselves to a more determined opposition, retaliated, by excommunicating Montgomery, and called upon the people to weep for their sins, and be prepared to peril all, rather than part with their religion. The country, at this moment, must have presented an extraordinary picture: the pulpits rang with alternate strains of lamentation and defiance. Patrick Simpson, alluding to the fate of Durie, declared that the principal link in the golden chain of the ministry was already broken. Davison, a firmer spirit, whose small figure and undaunted courage had procured him from Lennox the sobriquet of the "*petit diable*," exhorted his auditors to take courage, for God would dash the devil in his own devices; and, on the 27th of

⁴ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1189, May 30, 1582.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 1, 1582, Laird of Carmichael to Walsingham.

June, an extraordinary Assembly of the Church was convened in the capital, to meet the crisis which, in the language of the times, threatened destruction to their Zion.¹

The proceedings were opened by a remarkable sermon, or lecture, which Andrew Melvil delivered from the pulpit of the New Kirk. He chose for its subject the fourth chapter of the First Epistle to Timothy; and, in speaking of the fearful trials and heresies of the "latter days," inveighed, in no gentle terms, against the audacious proceedings of the court. The weapon now raised against them, he described as the "bloody gully"² of absolute power. And whence," said he, "came this gully? From the Pope. And against whom was it used? Against Christ himself: from whose Divine head these daring and wicked men would fain pluck the crown, and from whose hands they would wrench the sceptre." These might be deemed strong expressions, he added, but did not every day verify his words, and give new ground for alarm? "Need he point out to them the king's intended demission of the crown to his mother? Was not the palpable object of this scheme, which had been concocting these eight years past, the resumption of her lost power, and with it the re-establishment of her idolatrous worship? Who were its authors? Beaton, bishop of Glasgow, and Lesley, bishop of Ross. And by what devices did this last-named prelate explain their intentions to the imprisoned princess? To the letters which he sent, he had added a painting of a queen, with a little boy kneeling at her feet and imploring her blessing; whilst she extended one hand to her son, and with the other pointed to his ancestors, as if she exhorted him to walk in their footsteps, and follow their faith."³

At this Assembly, it was warmly debated whether Durie was bound to obey the sentence of banishment, a

point upon which opinions were much divided. The provost and magistrates contended that they must execute the law which had pronounced the sentence, or become themselves amenable to its penalties. One party of the ministers, taking a middle course, advised that two of their brethren, Mr David Ferguson and Mr Thomas Buchanan, should be sent to remonstrate with the king. But from this the fiery Davison loudly dissented. "Ye talk," said he, "of replacing John Durie. Will ye become suppliants for reinstating him whom the king had no power to displace, albeit his foolish flock have yielded?" At this, Sir James Balfour started to his feet, and fixed his eyes sternly on the speaker. Balfour was notorious as one of the murderers of Darnley; yet having been acquitted of that crime by a packed jury, he had resumed his functions as an elder of the Kirk.⁴ Such a man was not likely to overawe the bold minister; and he undauntedly continued:—"Tell me what flesh may or can displace the great King's ambassador, so long as he keeps within the bounds of his commission?" Saying this, he left the Assembly in great heat, perceiving that the question would be carried against him, which accordingly happened; for, on the resumption of the debate, it was determined that Durie should submit, if the magistrates, who belonged to his flock, insisted. They did so: and that very evening, he was charged not only to depart from the town, but not to reside within the freedom and bounds of the city.⁵ About nine o'clock the same night lie was seen taking his way through the principal street of the city, accompanied by two notaries, and a small band of his brethren, among whom were Lawson, Balcanuel, and Davison. On reaching the Market Cross, he directed the notaries to read a written protestation, in which he attested the sincerity of his life and doctrine; and declared that, although

¹ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1189-1192.

² Gully: a large knife; a sword, or weapon.

³ MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1192, June 27, 1582.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Burghley, August 18, 1581.

⁵ MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1195, 1196.

he obeyed the sentence of banishment, no mortal power should prevent him from preaching the Word.¹ Upon this, placing a piece of money in the hands of the notaries, he took instruments, as it was termed; and during the ceremony, Davison, who stood by his side, broke into threats and lamentation. "I too must take instruments," cried he; "and this, I protest, is the most sorrowful sight these eyes ever rested on; a shepherd removed by his own flock, to pleasure flesh and blood, and because he has spoken the truth. But plague, and fearful judgments, will yet light on the inventors." All this, however, passed away quietly, except on the part of the speakers; and the denunciations of the minister appear to have met with little sympathy. A shoemaker's wife in the crowd cried out, if any would cast stones at him, she would help.² A bystander, also, was heard to whisper to his neighbour, looking with scorn on the two protesters, "If I durst, I would take instruments that ye are both knaves."³

Shortly before this, a conference had been held at Stirling, between the commissioners of the court and the Kirk, which had concluded by the king directing the ministers to present him with a list of the grievances of which they complained. They accordingly prepared their "Articles," which, in bold and unequivocal language, drew the distinction between the obedience they owed to the king and the submission that was due to the Kirk. They complained that the monarch, by advice of evil counsellors, had taken upon him that spiritual authority which belonged to Christ alone, as the King and Head of His Church; and, as examples of this unwarrantable usurpation, appealed to the late banishment of Durie, the maintaining an excommunicated bishop, the interdicting the General Assembly from the exercise of their undoubted spiritual

¹ MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1196.

² Ibid. This same woman had troubled the Kirk much in Morton's time. Her name was Urquhart.

³ Calderwood, MS. Hist., fol. 1196.

rights, and the evil handling of the brethren of Glasgow for doing their duty in the case of Montgomery.⁴

The presentation of these Articles was intrusted to a committee of the ministers. It embraced Pont, Lawson, Smeton, Lindsay, Hay, Polwart, Blackburn, Galloway, Christison, Ferguson, James Melvil, Buchanan, Brand, Gillespie, Duncanson the minister of the king's household, and Andrew Melvil principal of the new College at St Andrews. To these a single layman was added in the person of Erskine of Dun, a name much venerated in the history of the Kirk. It had been agreed that these "Grieves" should be presented to the king in the beginning of July; and on the 6th of that month this intrepid band of ministers set out for Perth, where James then held his court. Their adversaries had in vain made many exertions to intimidate them; and secret information had been sent by Sir James Melvil, to his relative Andrew Melvil, that his life was in danger; but he only thanked God that he was not feeble in the cause of Christ, and proceeded forward with his brethren. On being ushered into the presence-chamber, they found Lennox and Arran with the king; and laid their remonstrance on the table. Arran took it up, glanced his eye over it, and furiously demanded, "Who dares sign these treasonable Articles?"— "We dare," responded Andrew Melvil, "and will render our lives in the cause." As he said this, he came forward to the council-table, took the pen, subscribed his name, and was followed by all his brethren. The two nobles were intimidated by this unlooked-for courage: the king was silent; and, after some conference, the ministers were dismissed in peace.⁵

It would have been well for Lennox and Arran had they taken warning from these symptoms of determined opposition; but they underrated the influence of the ministers,

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements from Scotland, 22d June 1582. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1198, 1199.

⁵ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1200, 1201.

and were not aware that, at this moment, a strong party of the nobility was forming against them. It was fostered by the Kirk, and encouraged by England; whilst its leaders, as usual in such enterprises, appear about this time to have drawn up a written contract, which declared the purposes for which they had leagued together. This paper was entitled the "Form of the Band, made among the noblemen that is enterprised against Dobany;"¹ and it described, in strong language, the causes which had led to the association. These were said to be, the dangers incurred by the professors of God's true religion; the intended overthrow of the gospel, by godless men, who had crept into credit with the king's majesty; the perversion of the laws; the wreck of the ancient nobility and the ministers of religion; the interruption of the amity with England; and the imminent peril of the king's person, unless some remedy were speedily adopted. "Wherefore," it continued, "we have sworn, in God's presence, and engaged, by this 'band,' to punish and remove the authors of these intended evils, and to re-establish justice and good order, as we shall answer to the Eternal God, and upon our honour, faith, and truth."² The original of this important paper has not been preserved, and the names of the associators do not appear in the copy; but we may pronounce them, from the evidence of other letters, to have been the Earls of Gowrie, Mar, Glencairn, Argyle, Montrose, Eglinton, and Rothes, with the Lords Lindsay, Boyd, and many others.³ The principal enemies to Lennox among the ministers, were Lawson, Lindsay, Hay, Smeton, Polwart, and Andrew Melvil.⁴

At the time this band was formed, its authors had not fixed upon any precise mode of attack; but the events which now occurred brought their

measures to a head, and compelled them to act upon the offensive.

Shortly previous to the interview of the ministers with the king at Perth, Montgomery had been reinstated in the bishopric of Glasgow by the royal command; and the sentence of excommunication pronounced upon him by the Kirk was reversed, and declared null. To soften, at the same time, the effect of this strong measure of defiance, the king, by a public proclamation, renounced all intention of making any changes in religion; and Montgomery, confiding in his restored honours, ventured from his seclusion at Dalkeith, where he had resided with his patron Lennox, and once more shewed himself in Edinburgh. But Lawson, one of the leading ministers, flew to the magistrates, accused them of permitting an excommunicated traitor to walk the streets, and compelled them to discharge him from their city.⁵ As he departed, Montgomery threatened that within half an hour they should change their tone; and within a brief space returned with a royal proclamation, which was read at the Cross, commanding all men to accept him as a true Christian and good subject. He brought also letters to the same purport, which were sent to the lords of session. All, however, was in vain, so strong was the popular current against him. The provost, in an agony of doubt between his duty to the king and his allegiance to the Kirk, impetrated vengeance upon his head, and declared he would have given a thousand merks he had never seen his face. The judges refused to hear him: and a report arising that he should be again expelled, an immense crowd assembled. Tradesmen, armed with bludgeons, and women with stones, waited round the door of the court; and their expected victim would probably have been torn in pieces, had he not been smuggled away by the magistrates through a narrow lane called the Kirk Heugh, which led to the Potterrow gate. His

¹ Caligula, C. vii. fol. 14, British Museum. A copy. Dobany is D'Aubigny, the Duke of Lennox.

² Ibid. See also MS., Calderwood, p. 1210.

³ Ibid., fol. 18, MS. Letter, Woddrington to Walsingham, 19th July 1582, Berwick.

⁴ MS.. Calderwood, fol. 1201.

⁵ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1198, 1201. July 2, 1582, and July 24.

retreat, however, became known ; the people broke in upon him with many abusive terms. False traitor ! thief ! man-sworn carle ! were bandied from mouth to mouth ; and as he sprang through the wicket, he received some smart blows upon the back. So little sympathy did he meet with from the king, that, when the story reached the court at Perth, James threw himself down upon the Inch, and, calling him a seditious loon, fell into convulsions of laughter.¹

The effect, however, was different upon Lennox. His penetration did not enable him to see the formidable strength which was gradually arraying itself against him ; and his blind obstinacy only hurried on the catastrophe. At the instigation of France,² he determined, by a sudden attack, to overwhelm his enemies ; and, assisted by the force which himself and Arran could command, to seize the Earls of Gowrie, Mar, and Glencairn, with Lindsay, and the chief of the Protestant nobles. Having achieved this, and banished the leading ministers of the Kirk, he looked forward to a triumphant conclusion of his labours in the establishment of Episcopacy, and the association of the imprisoned queen with the government of her son. Bowes, however, the English ambassador, became acquainted with these intentions, and informed the Protestant lords of the plot for their destruction. The minuteness of the information which this veteran diplomatist elicited by his pensioned informers, is remarkable.³ He assured Gowrie and his friends that they must look to themselves, or be content soon to change a prison for a scaffold ; that he had certain intelligence the king had consented to arraign them of a conspiracy against his person : and they knew that, if convicted of treason, their fate was sealed. It was by Walsingham's orders that Bowes made

this communication, in the hope that it would rouse the enemies of Lennox to immediate exertion ; nor was he disappointed.⁴ Appalled by the news, and aware that even a brief delay might sweep them over the precipice on which they stood, they felt the necessity of acting upon the moment. The only danger to be dreaded was in prematurely exploding the mine already in preparation, and thus risking a failure. The band or contract, as we have seen, had been drawn up ; but it was still unsigned by many of the nobility. There was scarcely time to concentrate all their forces ; and although they made sure of the approval of the ministers of the Kirk, who had already cordially co-operated with them in all their efforts against Lennox, still these ecclesiastical associates were now scattered in different parts of the country, and could not be individually consulted. On the other hand, the danger was imminent ; and if they acted instantly, some circumstances promised success. The young king was at Perth, separated both from Lennox and Arran.⁵ He had resorted to that country to enjoy his favourite pastime of the chase ; his court was few in number ; Gowrie, Glammis, and Lindsay, three of the chief conspirators, were all-powerful in the neighbourhood of Perth ; and should they delay, as had been intended, till the king removed to the capital, it would become more difficult, if not impossible, to execute their design. In this state of uncertainty, they received intelligence which made them more than suspect that Lennox had discovered their conspiracy.⁶ This settled the question : and having once decided on action, their proceedings were as bold as they had before been

¹ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1202.

² Sir R. Bowes to Secretary Walsingham, August 15, 1582, original draft. From the original Letter-book of Sir Robert Bowes, kindly communicated to me by my friend Sir Cuthbert Sharp.

³ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. IX.

⁴ Original draft, Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, August 25, 1582, Bowes' Letter-book. See also Woddrington to Walsingham, July 19, 1582, Caligula, C. vii.

⁵ Wednesday, August 22. Lennox was then at Dalkeith, Arran at Kinneil,—the first place six miles, the second eighteen miles from Edinburgh.

⁶ MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, August 26, 1572, Bowes' Letter-book. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 277, 281.

dilatory. In an incredibly short time, Gowrie, Mar, Lindsay, the Master of Glammis, and their associates, assembled a thousand men, and surrounded Ruthven castle, where the king then lay. It was Gowrie's own seat; and James, who, it appears, had no suspicion of the toils laid for him, had accepted the invitation of its master, thinking only of his rural sports. To his astonishment, the Earls of Mar and Gowrie entered his presence, removed his guards, presented a list of their grievances, and, whilst they professed the utmost fidelity to his person, took special care that all possibility of escape was cut off. Meanwhile the intelligence flew to Arran that the king was captive; and he and Colonel Stewart, his brother, set off in fiery speed at the head of a party of horse. Their attempt at rescue was, however, too late; for Colonel Stewart was attacked and defeated by Mar and Lochleven, who threw themselves upon him from an ambush, where they had watched his approach; whilst Arran, who had galloped by a nearer way to Ruthven, was seized the moment he entered the castle court, and confined under a guard. All this had passed with such rapidity, and the lords who surrounded the king treated him with so much respect, that James deluded himself with the hope that he might still be a free monarch. But next morning dispelled the illusion. As he prepared to take horse, the Master of Glammis intimated to him that the lords who were now with him deemed it safer for his grace to remain at Ruthven. James declared he would go that instant, and was about to leave the chamber, when this baron rudely interposed, and placing his leg before the king, so as to intercept the doorway, commanded him to remain. The indignity drew tears from the young monarch, and some of the associated lords remonstrated with Glammis; but he sternly answered, "Better bairns¹ greet, than bearded men;" a speech which his

royal master never afterwards forgot or forgave.²

But although thus far successful, the actors in this violent and treasonable enterprise were in a dangerous predicament. Gowrie, Mar, Glammis, and Lindsay were indeed all assured of each other, and convinced that they must stand or fall together; but the band or covenant which, according to the practice of the times, should have secured the assistance of their associates, was still unsigned by a great majority of the most powerful nobles and barons, on whose assistance they had calculated. On the other hand, the Duke of Lennox could reckon on the support of the Earls of Huntly, Sutherland, Morton, Orkney, Crawford, and Bothwell; besides Lords Herries, Seton, Hume, Sir Thomas Kerr of Fernyhirst, Sir James Balfour, the Abbot of Newbottle, and many inferior barons; whilst the Earls of Caithness, March, and Marshal professed neutrality.³ This array of opposition was sufficiently appalling; and for a brief season the enterprisers of the "raid"⁴ of Ruthven (as it was called) began to waver and tremble;⁵ but a moment's consideration convinced them that, if there was danger in advance, there was infinitely greater in delay. They were already guilty of treason; they had laid violent hands on the king's person; had defied Lennox, imprisoned Arran, outraged the laws, and raised against them the feelings, not only of their opponents, but of all good citizens. If they drew back, ruin was inevitable. If they went forward, although the peril was great, the struggle might yet end triumphantly. They had the young king in their hands, and could work upon his timidity and inexperience, by menacing his life; they had possession of Arran also, a man whom

² MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4737, fol. 682, 683. Spottiswood, p. 320.

³ State-paper Office, Names of the noblemen and lords that as yet stand with the duke, September 5, 1582.

⁴ Raid, a Scottish word; meaning a forcible inroad, or invasion.

⁵ MS., Caligula, C. vii. fol. 23, Sir George Carey to Burghley, September 5, 1582.

¹ Bairns, children; greet, weep.

they dreaded far more than the gentler and vacillating Lennox; they were certain of the active support of the ministers of the Kirk; and Bowes and Walsingham had already assured them of the warm approval, and, if necessary, the assistance of England. All this was encouraging; and they determined, at every risk, to press on resolutely in the revolution which they had begun.

In the meantime, whilst such scenes passed at Ruthven, the capital presented a stirring scene. Lennox, who was at his castle of Dalkeith, in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, when he received the intelligence of the surprise of the king, deeming himself insecure in the open country, took refuge with his household within the town. On his arrival, the magistrates despatched messengers to Ruthven, to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the king's captivity from his own lips; the ministers of the Kirk began to exult, and rouse the people to join with the Ruthven lords; and Mr James Lawson, although earnestly entreated, by the provost of the city, to be temperate in his sermon, replying, in the words of Micah, that what the Lord put in his mouth he would speak,¹ seized the opportunity to deliver from the pulpit a bitter and emphatic attack upon the duke and his profligate associate Arran. It was true, he said, that these two barons had subscribed the Confession of Faith, professed the true religion, and communicated with their brethren at the Lord's table; but their deeds testified that they were utter enemies of the truth. Had they not violated discipline, despised the solemn sentence of excommunication, set up *tulchan* bishops, and traduced the most godly of the nobility and of the ministry? And as for this Duke of Lennox, what had been his practices since the day he came amongst them? With what taxes had he burdened the commonwealth, to sustain his intolerable pride? What vanity in apparel; what looseness in manners; what superfluity in banqueting; what fruits and follies

of French growth had he not imported into their simple country? Well might they be thankful; well praise God for their delivery from what was to have been executed the next Tuesday. Well did it become Edinburgh to take up the song of the Psalmist,—“*Laqueus contritus est, et nos liberati sumus.*”²

Whilst the ministers of the Kirk thus eulogised the enterprise of the Ruthven lords, Elizabeth, who had speedily received intelligence of their success, despatched Sir George Carey to Scotland, with letters to the young king, and instructions to co-operate with her ambassador Bowes in strengthening the hands of Gowrie and his faction. Randolph, too, wrote in great exultation to Walsingham, rejoicing in the success of the revolution; and, with the avidity and instinct of the bird which comes out in the storm, requesting to be again employed in the troubled atmosphere of Scotland. Unmoved by the violence of the measures which had been adopted, he, in the spirit of the Puritan party to which he belonged, pronounced the king's captivity a reward conferred by God on His sincere followers. “If it be true,” said he, “that the king be now in the Protestants' hands, the duke pursued, Arran imprisoned, and his brother slain, we may then see from this what it is to be true followers of Christ, in earnest preaching, and persevering in setting forth His Word without respect or worldly policies.”³ It seems strange it should never have occurred to this zealous diplomatist, that the imprisonment of a king, and the violent invasion and slaughter of his councillors, were not the fruits to be expected from the gospel of peace and love.

Meanwhile the captive monarch considered the late proceedings in a very different light, and meditated many schemes of escape and revenge; but he was alone, and closely watched: he did not even consider his life in

² Calderwood MS., fol. 1206, Ayscough, 4736, British Museum.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, September 2, 1582, Maidstone.

¹ Calderwood, MS. History, fol. 1205, 1206.

safety; and although it would be difficult to believe that Gowrie and his associates had any such atrocious designs, yet the history of Scotland afforded him too good a ground for these apprehensions. Lennox, on the other hand, was timid and irresolute, allowed the precious moments for action to pass, and contented himself with despatching Lord Herries, and the Abbot of Newbottle, with some offers of reconciliation, which were instantly rejected.¹

These envoys, on arriving at Stirling, where Gowrie and his fellow-conspirators now held the king a prisoner, were not permitted to see James in private, but were introduced to him in the council-chamber, where they declared their message. "The Duke of Lennox," they said, "had sent them to inquire into the truth of a rumour, that his sovereign lord was forcibly detained in the hands of his enemies; for if it were so, it was his duty to set him free; and with the assistance of his good subjects, he would instantly make the attempt." The scene which occurred, on the delivery of this message, must have been an extraordinary one. Without giving Gowrie or his friends a moment to reply, James started from his seat, crying out it was

all true; he was a captive; he was not at liberty to go where he chose, or to move a step without a guard: and he bade them tell it openly, that all who loved him should assist the duke, and achieve his deliverance. The Ruthven lords were, for a moment, overwhelmed with confusion: but they outbraved the accusation. Their sovereign, they declared, had no more faithful subjects than themselves; nor should he be denied to go where he pleased; only, they would not permit the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran to mislead him any longer. If he valued, therefore, the life of that person, he would do well to cause him to retire instantly, and quietly, to France. If this were not done, they must call him to account for his late actions, and enforce against him the most rigorous penalty of the law.² Such was the message which they sent back by Lord Herries; and they followed it up by a peremptory command to Lennox to deliver up Dumbarton castle, quit the kingdom within twelve days, and, meanwhile, confine himself with a small train to his houses of Aberdour or Dalkeith; orders which, after a short consideration, he despondingly and pusillanimously prepared to obey.³

CHAPTER III.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1582—1584.

ALL was now joy and exultation with the Ruthven lords, and the ministers of the Kirk, who cordially embraced their cause. Mr John Durie, who had been banished from his pulpit, in the capital, was brought back in processional triumph. As he entered the town, a crowd of nearly two thousand

people walked before him bareheaded, and singing the 124th Psalm; and, amid the shouts of the citizens, conducted him to the High Church.⁴ It

² Spottiswood, pp. 320, 321.

³ Copy of the time, endorsed, 14th September from Stirling, 20th September to Windsor; also MS. Letter, Bowes to Walsingham, Stirling, 20th September 1582, Bowes' Letter-book.

⁴ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1212. They sang it in four parts.

was observed that Lennox, from a window, looked down on the crowd, and tore his beard for anger; but although still supported by a considerable party amongst the citizens, he shewed no disposition to contest the field with his enemies; and next day, accompanied by Lord Maxwell, Fernyhirst, and others of his friends, he left the city, and took the road to Dalkeith. This, however, was only to blind his opponents; for he soon wheeled off in an opposite direction, and, with eighty horse, galloped to Dumbarton.¹

Meanwhile Gowrie and his associates carried all with a bold hand. They had already compelled the king to issue a proclamation, in which he declared that he was a free monarch, and preferred to remain for the present at Stirling; both assertions being well known to be false. They now committed Arran to a stricter ward, summoned a convention of the nobility for an early day, required the Kirk to send commissioners to this Assembly, promised to hear and remove its complaints, and gave a cordial welcome to Sir George Carey and Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassadors, who had now arrived at Stirling.²

At this audience Carey delivered a gracious message from his royal mistress; but when he alluded to the dangerous practices of Lennox, and charged him with meditating an alteration in religion, and the overthrow of the king's estate and person, James could not conceal his passion and disgust. He warmly vindicated his favourite: affirmed that nothing had been done by Lennox alone, but with advice of the council; and declared his utter disbelief that any treason could be

proved against him.³ Elizabeth and Walsingham, however, trusted that this would not be so difficult; for they had lately seized and examined two persons, who managed the secret correspondence which the imprisoned Queen of Scots had recently carried on with Lennox, her son, and the court of France. These were George Douglas of Lochleven, the same who had assisted the queen in her escape, and the noted Archibald Douglas, cousin to the late Regent Morton, who had remained in exile in England since the execution of his relative and the triumph of Lennox.

This Archibald, a daring and unprincipled man, had been a principal agent in the murder of Darnley, and had played, since that time, a double game in England. He had become reconciled to Lennox, and was trusted, in their confidential measures, by Mary and the French court; whilst he had ingratiated himself with Elizabeth, Walsingham, and Randolph, to whom he unscrupulously betrayed the intrigues of their opponents. On the late fall of Arran, the mortal enemy of the house of Douglas, he had written an exulting letter to Randolph,⁴ and had begun his preparations for his return to his native-country, when he was seized, by the orders of the English queen, his house and papers ransacked, and his person committed to the custody of Henry Killigrew, who by no means relished the charge of the "old Fox," as he styled him in his letter to Walsingham.⁵

From the revelations of these two persons much was expected; and George Douglas confessed that he had carried on a correspondence between Mary and her son, in which she had consented to "demit" the crown in his favour, on the condition of being associated with him in the government: he affirmed, too, that her friends in France had consented to

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, 12th September 1582. Calderwood, MS. Hist., fol. 1213.

² Calderwood, MS. Hist., Ayscough, 4726, fol. 1211, 1212. Ibid., fol. 1213. Carey had audience on the 12th September. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 14th September 1582, Carey to Elizabeth. Endorsed by himself, "Copy of my Letter to the Queen's Majesty." Bowes was at Berwick on the 10th, and at Stirling on the 14th September. Bowes' Letter-book.

³ Calderwood, MS. History, fol. 1213.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, September 12, 1582. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. X.

⁵ Ibid., Henry Killigrew to Walsingham, September 17, 1582.

recognise him as king. It was evident, also, that a constant communication had been kept up between Lennox and the captive queen, in which the Bishop of Glasgow, her ambassador at the French court, had assisted; but it would have required much ingenuity to construe this into treason on the part of Lennox, and the examinations of Archibald Douglas gave no colour to the accusation. Arran indeed, who was still a prisoner at Ruthven, offered to purchase his freedom by discovering enough to cost Lennox his head;¹ but the lords would not trust him, and preferred relying on their own exertions to accepting so dangerous an alliance.

In these efforts they derived the most active assistance from the ministers of the Kirk, who, on first hearing of the enterprise at Ruthven, despatched Mr James Lawson, and Mr John Davison, to have a preliminary conference with Gowrie and his associates at Stirling;² and, a few days after, sent a more solemn deputation, including Andrew Melvil and Thomas Smeton, to explain to the privy council the griefs and abuses of which the Kirk demanded redress.³ At this meeting, the causes which had led to the late revolution were fully debated; and a band or covenant was drawn up, declaring the purposes for which it had been undertaken, and calling upon all who loved their country and the true religion to subscribe it, and unite in their defence. Two days after this, Lennox, from his retreat at Dumbarton, published an indignant denial of the accusations brought against him; in which he demanded a fair trial before the three estates, and declared his readiness to suffer any punishment, if found guilty.⁴ He alluded in this to the king's captivity, and retorted against the Ruthven lords the charge of treason; but the associates fulminated a counter-declaration, repelled this as an unfounded calumny,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, September 12, 1582.

² On the 15th September 1582. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1227.

³ Ibid.

⁴ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1225.

and insisted, that to say the king was detained against his will was a manifest lie, the contrary being known to all men.⁵ What shall we say or think of the Kirk, when we find its ministers lending their countenance and assent to an assertion which they must have known to be utterly false?

In the midst of these commotions which followed the raid of Ruthven, occurred the death of Buchanan, a man justly entitled to the epithet great, if the true criteria of such a character are originality of genius, and the impression left by it upon his age. His intellect, naturally fearless and inquisitive, caught an early and eager hold of the principles of the Reformation; and having gone abroad, and fallen into the toils of the inquisition, persecution completed what nature had begun. In politics he was a republican; and his famous treatise, "De Jure Regni apud Scotos," was the first work which boldly and eloquently advocated those principles of popular liberty then almost new, and now so familiar to Europe. In religion he was at first a leveller, and with the keen and vindictive temper which distinguished him, exerted every effort to overthrow the Roman Catholic Church; but in his later years, when the struggle took place between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, his sentiments became more moderate or indifferent; and latterly he took no part in those busy intrigues of the Kirk and its supporters which terminated in the raid of Ruthven. Of his poetical works, so varied in style and so excellent in execution, it is difficult to speak too highly; for seldom did a finer and more impassioned vein of poetry flow through a Latinity that, without servile imitation, approached so near to the Augustan age. In his history of his native country he is great, but unequal: his was not the age of severe and critical investigation; the school in which he studied was that of Livy and the historians of ancient Rome, in which individuality and truth are often lost in the breadth and generality of its pictures. But

⁵ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1225.

in their excellences he has equalled and sometimes surpassed them. The calm flow of his narrative, his lucid arrangement, the strong sense, originality, and depth of his reflections, and the ease and vigour of his unshackled style, need not dread a comparison with the best authors of the ancient world. The point where he fails is that in which they, too, are weakest—the cardinal virtue of truth. It is melancholy to find so much fable embalmed and made attractive in his earlier annals; and when he descends later, and writes as a contemporary, it is easy to detect that party spirit and unhappy obliquity of vision, which distorts or will not see the truth. In an interesting letter quoted by the best of his biographers,¹ and written not long before his death, he tells his friend, that having reached his seventy-fifth year, and struck upon that rock beyond which nothing remains for man but labour and sorrow, it was his only care to remove out of the world with as little noise as possible. With this view he abstracted himself from all public business; left the court at Stirling, and retired to Edinburgh, where, on the 28th September 1582, his wishes were almost too literally fulfilled: for amid the tumult and agitation which succeeded the raid of Ruthven, his death took place in his seventy-sixth year, unnoticed, unrecorded, and accompanied by such destitution, that he left not enough to defray his funeral. He was buried at the public expense in the cemetery of the Grayfriars; but his country gave him no monument; and at this day the spot is unknown where rest the ashes of one of the greatest of her sons.²

Soon after the death of Buchanan, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh on the 9th of October; and the noblemen who had engaged in the en-

terprise at Ruthven, having laid before this great ecclesiastical council their “Declaration” of the grounds on which they acted, received, to their satisfaction, the cordial approval of the Kirk. Nor was this all: the Assembly issued their orders, that every minister throughout the kingdom should justify the action, and explain to his congregation the imminent perils from which it had delivered religion, the commonwealth, and the king’s person; and not satisfied even with this, it was determined to institute a rigid prosecution of all persons who presumed to express a different opinion.³ But although thus resolute in the support of the Ruthven confederates, as far as concerned their seizure of the king, the ministers severely rebuked the same noblemen for the profligacy of their lives, and their sacrilegious appropriation of the ecclesiastical revenues. Davison, the minister of Liberton, in his conference with Gowrie and his friends, called loudly on them to begin their reformation of the commonwealth with a thorough reform of their sinful and abominable conversation, polluted as it was by swearing, lust, and oppression; and to shew the sincerity of their repentance by resigning the “*teinds*” into the hands of their true owners;⁴ whilst Craig, in preaching before the court, drew tears from the eyes of the young monarch by the severity of his rebuke.⁵

About this time, Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador at Edinburgh, having learnt that the celebrated casket, which contained the disputed letters of Mary to Bothwell, had come, in the late troubles, into the possession of the Earl of Gowrie, communicated the intelligence to Elizabeth. By her anxious and repeated orders he exerted himself to obtain it; but without success. Gowrie at first equivocated, and was unwilling to admit the fact; but when Bowes convinced him that he had certain proof of it, he

¹ Irving’s Life of Buchanan, p. 273.

² Ibid., p. 309. There appears to have been placed over his grave a common flat stone or headstone, with some inscription; but this, from neglect, was in process of years covered up by weeds and soil, and the spot where it once was is now known.

³ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1232-4; also fol. 1236.

⁴ Ibid., fol. 1227.

⁵ Ibid., fol. 1228

changed his ground, alleging that such precious papers could not be delivered to Elizabeth without the special directions of the king. This was absurd, for James at this moment was a mere cipher; but the leader in the late revolution did not choose to part with papers which, in his busy and intriguing career, he might one day turn to his advantage.¹ Gowrie's is the last hand into which we can trace these famous letters, which have since totally disappeared.

The situation of James was now pitiable and degrading. He hated the faction who had possession of his person: but terror for his life compelled him to dissemble; and he was convinced, that to gain delay and throw his enemies off their guard by appearing reconciled to the dismissal of Lennox, was the surest step to a recovery of his liberty. The most anxious wish of his heart was to see the duke restored to his former power; but to betray this now would, he thought, be to bring his favourite into more imminent peril; whilst, if he allowed him to retire for a short season to France, he might not only escape ruin, but return with renewed influence and power. There were some friends of Lennox's, on the other hand, who exhorted him strongly to attack his enemies, and assured him that every day spent in inactivity added strength to their position and weakened his own; whereas, if he boldly faced the danger, they were ready to assemble a force sufficient to overwhelm Gowrie, and rescue the king. These so far prevailed that, on one of the dark nights of December,² it was resolved to attack the palace of Holyrood, massacre the Ruthven lords, and carry off the king; but the ministers, and Sir George Bowes, the English ambassador, sounded the alarm: a strong watch was kept; and although Fernyhirst, Maxwell, Sir John Seton, and other barons,

were known to have joined Lennox, and parties of horsemen were seen hovering all night round the city, the enterprise, from some unknown cause, was abandoned, and the king remained a prisoner.³

This failure was a triumph to the opposite faction, who lost no time in following up the advantage. A letter was sent to the duke, to which the king had been compelled to put his name, charging him with disturbing the government, and with recklessly endangering the safety of the royal person; whilst a herald was despatched to command him, in the name of the council, instantly to leave the country upon pain of treason.⁴ This order, after many vain pretexts and fruitless delays, he at last obeyed; having first sent a passionate remonstrance to his royal master, against the cruelty and injustice with which he had been treated.⁵ On his road to London, (for he had obtained permission to pass through England into France,) he encountered two ambassadors who were posting to the Scottish court: La Motte, who carried a message from the King of France; and Davison, who was commissioned by Elizabeth to examine the state of parties in Scotland, and co-operate with Bowes in strengthening the Ruthven faction. It was the anxious desire of the English queen that no communication should take place between La Motte and the duke, as she had received secret information that this Frenchman came to promote the great scheme of an "association" between Mary and her son, by which the Scottish queen was nominally to be joined with him in the government, whilst he was

¹ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1244, 1245. Also MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, December 6, 1582, which gives an interesting account of the intended attempt. It was proposed to slay the Earl of Mar, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the Prior of Blantyre, and Mr John Colvile. Bowes's letter-book.

² MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, December 9, 1582. Bowes's letter-book.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil, "From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish king: from Dumbarton, December 16," 1582. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XI.

¹ The letters of Bowes upon this subject are preserved in his original letter-book, now before me, and kindly communicated by Sir Cuthbert Sharp. Very full extracts from them were printed by Robertson, in his last edition, from copies sent him by Birch.

² On the 4th December 1582.

to retain the title of king.¹ It was believed, also, that he was empowered to propose a marriage between the young king and a daughter of France, and to strengthen the Catholic party by promises of speedy support. Walsingham, therefore, threw every delay in the way of the French ambassador; and he acted so successfully, that La Motte found all his purposes counteracted. He was eager to hurry into Scotland before Lennox had left it; but matters were so managed, that they only met on the road; and here, too, Davison, who had received his lesson, took care that their conference should be of the briefest description.² Lennox then passed on to London, and the French and English ambassadors held their way for Scotland.

Meanwhile the Ruthven lords, with their allies the ministers of the Kirk, were much elated by the triumph over Lennox; and Bowes, in a letter to Walsingham, assured the secretary that Elizabeth might have them all at her devotion if she would but advance the money necessary for their contentment and the support of the king.³ They selected Mr John Colville, who had acted a principal part in the late revolution, to proceed as ambassador to the English queen. He came nominally from the King of Scots, but really from them, and brought letters to Walsingham from Gowrie, Mar, the Prior of Blantyre, and the Abbot of Dunfermline, the great leaders of that party. On his arrival at court, he found there his old antagonist the Duke of Lennox, who had brought a letter and a message to Elizabeth from his royal master. This princess had, at first, refused to see him under any circumstances; but afterwards admitted him to a private interview, in which, to use the homely but expressive phrase

of Calderwood, the historian of the Kirk, "she rattled him up,"⁴ addressing to him, at first, many cutting speeches on his misgovernment; to which the duke replied with so much gentleness and good sense, that she softened down before they parted, and dismissed him courteously.⁵

During Lennox's brief residence in London, Secretary Walsingham exerted the utmost efforts to discover his real sentiments on religion; as the ministers of the Kirk insisted that, notwithstanding his professed conversion, he continued a Roman Catholic at heart; and that the whole principles of his government had been, and would continue to be, hostile to England. It is curious to observe by what low devices, and with what complete success, the English secretary became possessed of Lennox's most secret feelings and opinions. There was at the English court one Mr William Fowler, a gentleman of Scottish extraction, and apparently connected with the duke, who had admitted him into his secret confidence. Fowler, at the same time, had insinuated himself into the good graces of Mauvissiere, the resident French ambassador at the court of Elizabeth; and by pretending a devoted attachment to French interests and the cause of the captive Queen of Scots, he had become acquainted with much of the intentions and intrigues of Mary and her friends. This man was a spy of Walsingham's; and his letters to this statesman, detailing his secret conversations with Lennox and Mauvissiere, have been preserved. The picture which they present is striking. In their first interview, Lennox shewed much satisfaction. "Your mother's house," said he to Fowler, "was the first I entered, in coming to Scotland, and the last I quitted, in leaving the country." The duke then told him that the French ambassador was not in London, but had been sent for sud-

¹ MS., State-paper Office, January 20, 1582-3, "Article présentée par La Motte."

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, January 3, 1582. *Ibid.*, Sir W. Mildmay to Walsingham, December 29, 1582. *Ibid.*, Burghley or Walsingham to Mr. Bowes, January 4, 1582-3.

³ *Ibid.*, Bowes to Walsingham, about the 18th December 1582.

⁴ The interview took place on Monday, January 14, 1582-3. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1250.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, — (Fowler, I think) to Walsingham, January 1582-3.

denly to court. This was a trick, he added, to prevent a meeting between him and Mauvissiere; and he heard, also, that the Queen of England would not see him; but, in truth, he had little to say to her, except to complain of the conduct of her ambassador in Scotland. At this moment their conference was broken off by some of the courtiers, who appeared dissatisfied that they should talk together; and the master of Livingston, who was in the confidence of Lennox and his friends, joined the party. Fowler upon this took Livingston aside, and expressed his astonishment that the duke should have left Scotland, when he could muster so strong a party against his enemies. Livingston replied, that Lennox knew both his own strength and the king's good-will; but that he had been forced to leave Scotland, "because the king mistrusted very much his own life and safety; having been sharply threatened by the lords, that if he did not cause the duke to depart, he should not be the longest liver of them all."¹ Arran, it appeared, had also written to James, assuring him that the only surety for his life was to send Lennox out of Scotland; and Fowler, in his secret meetings with Mauvissiere, the French ambassador, had the address to elicit from him, and communicate to Walsingham, the intended policy of France. La Motte Fenelon had been sent, he said, to renew the old league with Scotland; to offer succour to the young king, if he found him in captivity, and a guard for the security of his person; to promise pensions to the principal noblemen in Scotland, as they had in Cardinal Beaton's time; and, if possible, to advise a marriage with Spain. As to James's religious sentiments, Lennox had assured Mauvissiere that the young king was so constant to the Reformed faith, that he would lose his life rather than forsake it; and when

the ambassador asked the duke whether he, too, was a Huguenot, he declared that he professed the same faith as his royal master.²

At the same time that he thus fathomed the schemes of Lennox and the French court, Walsingham had secured and corrupted another agent of the captive queen's, who, on the discovery of his practices with Mary and the English Catholics, had, as we have above seen, been thrown into prison by Elizabeth. This was that same Archibald Douglas, above mentioned as a man of considerable ability and restless intrigue. It had been proposed by Lennox to bring Douglas back to Scotland, and employ his power and talents against the English faction and the Kirk; but the young king had shrunk from receiving a man stained with his father's blood: and the prisoner, anxious for his freedom, was ready to purchase it by betraying the secrets of his royal mistress; consenting to plot against her with the same activity which he had exerted in her behalf.³ We shall soon perceive the success of this base scheme, and its fatal influence upon the fate of Mary.

In the meantime Elizabeth gave an audience to Colvile, the ambassador of Gowrie and the Kirk, and assured him of her entire approval of their spirited proceedings against Lennox. She cautioned him, in strong terms, against French intrigues; observing that, though the king promised fair, yet, as the recent conspiracy for seizing his person plainly shewed, "*Satanas non dormit*"; and she concluded by a general assurance of support, and a promise to restore Archibald Douglas to his native country, as soon as he had cleared himself from the accusations against him in England.⁴ Scotland, during these transactions, must have been in a state of extraordinary excite-

¹ Fowler to Walsingham, January 19, 1582-3. Also same (as I think) to Walsingham, January 1582-3.

² State-paper Office, —— to Walsingham, January 1582-3.

³ State-paper Office, January 18, 1582-3. Her Majesty's answer to Mr Colvile's negotiation.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, January 5, 1582-3. Fowler used a mark, or cipher, for his name.

ment: it was a busy stirring stage, upon which the young king, the ministers of the Kirk, the French ambassador, and Gowrie, with the rest of the Ruthven lords, acted their different parts with the utmost zeal and activity. James, whom necessity had made an adept in political hypocrisy, or, as he sometimes styled it, king-craft, pretended to be completely reconciled to the departure of Lennox, and said nothing in condemnation of the violent conduct of his opponents; whilst he secretly intrigued for the recall of his favourite, and anticipated the moment when he should resume his liberty, and take an ample revenge upon his enemies. The ministers, on their side, deemed the season too precious to be neglected; they had expelled the man whom they considered the emissary of Antichrist, the young king's person was in the hands of their friends, and they determined that he should remain so.

Such being the state of things, the arrival of Monsieur de Menainville, the French ambassador, and his request to have a speedy audience of the king, aroused them to instant action. From the pulpits resounded the notes of warning and alarm. France was depicted as the stronghold of idolatry; the French king pointed out as the tiger who glutted himself with the blood of God's people; it became amongst them a matter of serious debate whether it were lawful to receive any ambassador from an idolater; and when the more violent could not carry their wishes, and it was decided that, "in matters politick," such a messenger might be permitted to enter the kingdom, a committee was appointed to wait upon the young king, and read him a solemn lesson of admonition.¹ In this interview James behaved with spirit, and proved a match in theological and political controversy for the divines who came to instruct him. These were Pont, Lawson, Lindsay, and Davison; and, on entering the royal cabinet, they found Gowrie, the justice-clerk, and others

of the council, with the king, who thanked them for their advice,² but observed that he was bound by the law of nations to use courtesy to all ambassadors. Should an envoy come from the Pope, or even from the Turk, still he must receive him. This Lawson stoutly controverted; but the king not only maintained his point, but took occasion to blame the abuse with which this minister had assailed the French monarch. "As for that," said they, "the priests speak worse of your grace in France, than we of the king of France in Scotland."—"And must ye imitate them in evil?" retorted James. "Not in evil," was their answer, "but in liberty. It is as fair for us to speak the truth boldly, as they boldly speak lees;² and if we were silent, the chronicles would speak and reprove it."—"Chronicles," said James, "ye write not histories when ye preach;" upon which Davison whispered in Lawson's ear that preachers had more authority to declare the truth in preaching, than any historiographer in the world. Gowrie then observed, that as hasty a ride as might be should be got of the French ambassadors, and the ministers took their leave; but Davison lingered for a moment behind his brethren, craved a private word in the king's ear, and remonstrated *sotto voce* against his profane custom of swearing in the course of his argument. "Sir," said he, "I thought good to advertise you, but not before the rest, that ye swore and took God's name in vain too often in your speeches." James was nowise displeased with this honest freedom; but, accompanying the reverend monitor to the door of the cabinet, put his hand lovingly upon his shoulder, expressed his thanks for the reproof, and, above all, lauded him for the unusually quiet manner in which it had been administered.³

No such reserve or delicacy, however, was shewn by the ministers to the French ambassadors; and Monsieur de Menainville, a man of great spirit, was compelled to vindicate their

¹ MS., Calderwood, pp. 1247-51, inclusive, British Museum.

² "Lees," lies.

³ MS., Calderwood, vol. 1250, 1252.

privileges in his first public audience. It had been debated by the Kirk, with a reference to their arrival, whether private masses should be permitted under any circumstances; and aware of this, he had scarcely risen from kissing the king's hand, when he put on his cap, and boldly claimed the privileges which belonged to his office. "I am come," said he, "from the most Christian king of France, my sovereign, to offer all aid to the establishment of quietness; and being an ambassador, and not a subject, I crave to be treated as such; and as I have food allotted for my body, so do I require to be allowed the food of my soul, I mean the mass; which if it is denied me, I may not stay and suffer a Christian prince's authority and embassy to be violated in my person."¹ This spirited address made much noise at the time, and drew from Mr James Lawson, on the succeeding Sabbath, a "counterblast" of defiance, in which, seizing the opportunity of elucidating the mission of the king of Babylon, he "pointed out the French ambassage," and denounced Monsieur de Menainville as the counterpart of the blasphemous and railing Rabshakeh. Nor was this all: the indignation of the Kirk was roused to a still higher pitch, when the king commanded the magistrates of the capital to give (as had been usual in such cases) a farewell banquet to De la Motte Fenelon. This ambassador now proposed to return to France, leaving his colleague, Monsieur de Menainville, to watch over the interests of that kingdom in Scotland; and nothing could equal the abuse and opprobrious terms which were employed to convince men of the horrors of such a proposal. Even the sacred ornament of the cross, which La Motte, who was a knight of the order of the "Saint Esprit," wore upon his mantle, was described as the badge of Antichrist; and when the influence of the ministers was found insufficient to stay the feast, a solemn fast was proclaimed for the same day, to continue as long as the alleged profane entertainment was enacting. At this moment, the scene

¹ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1253.

presented by the capital was extraordinary. On one side, the king and his courtiers indulging in mirth and festive carousal; whilst, on the other, was heard the thunder of the Kirk, and its ministers "crying out all evil, slanderous, and injurious words that could be spoken against France;" and threatening with anathema and excommunication the citizens who had dared to countenance the unhallowed feast.²

Meanwhile the king became every day more weary of his captive condition; and secretly favoured the efforts of De Menainville, who remained in Scotland, and spared neither money nor promises in drawing together a faction against Gowrie and his associates. It was necessary, however, to act slowly and with great caution, for the keen eyes of Bowes and Davison, Elizabeth's agents at the Scottish court, early detected these intrigues. Walsingham, too, was informed of the frequent communications which took place between the captive queen and her son; and his spies and agents on the Continent sent him, almost daily, information of the correspondence of the English refugees and foreign Catholics with their friends in England.³ Had Elizabeth seconded, as was necessary, the indefatigable efforts of her ministers, it can hardly be doubted that she would have overthrown the efforts of France; but her parsimony was so excessive,⁴ that Walsingham found himself compelled to renounce many advantages which the slightest sacrifice of money would have secured. It was in vain that she commanded Bowes and Davison to remonstrate with the young king; to warn him of the confederacies of foreign princes against religion; to point out the great forces lately raised in France; to declare her astonishment at his suffering the insolence of De Menainville, and receiving, as she heard he had

² Spottiswood, p. 324. Historie of James the Sixth, pp. 196, 197. MS., Calderwood, p. 1253.

³ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1254.

⁴ Orig. Minute, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, March 2, 1582-3. Also State-paper Office, same to same, Feb. 27, 1582-3.

done, with complacency, the congratulations of La Motte on his intended "association" with his mother, the Queen of Scots. It was in vain that she expressed her alarm at the report which had reached her, that he meant to recall the Duke of Lennox from France, and restore the Earl of Arran to his liberty; in vain that she begged him to peruse the letter written to him with her own hand, expressing her opinion of that turbulent man whose ambition knew no limits, and would inevitably cast his state into new troubles. These remonstrances James, who was an early adept in diplomatic hypocrisy, received with expressions of gratitude and devotedness; but they did not in the slightest degree alter his efforts to regain his freedom, and strengthen his party; whilst, with a talent and sagacity superior to his years, he controlled the more violent of his friends, forbade all sudden movements, and calmly watched for a favourable moment to put forth his strength, and resume his freedom.

This patience, indeed, was still necessary; for, although gradually losing ground, the strength of Gowrie, and the faction of the Kirk, was yet too powerful for their opponents; and a convention having been held by them in the capital, (April 18, 1583,) it was resolved to assemble parliament. Against this measure James, who dreaded the proscription of his friends, and the total overthrow of his designs, remonstrated in the strongest terms, and even to tears, when his request was denied. He prevailed so far, however, as to have the meeting of the three estates delayed till October; and cheerfully consented that a friendly embassy should be despatched to England. To this service, two persons of very opposite principles were appointed: Colonel Stewart, the brother of the Earl of Arran, who was much in the king's confidence, and had been bribed by De Menainville; and Mr John Colvile, who was attached to Gowrie and the Ruthven lords. Their open instructions were to communicate to Elizabeth, from the king, the measures he had adopted for the security

and tranquillity of his realm; to request her approval and assistance; to move her to restore the lands in England which belonged to his grandfather, the Earl of Lennox, and the Countess of Lennox, his grandmother, and to have some consultation on his marriage.¹ They were, lastly, enjoined to make strict inquiry whether any act was contemplated in prejudice of his succession to the English crown, and, if possible, to ascertain the queen's own feelings upon this delicate subject.² De Menainville, the French ambassador, still lingered in Scotland, although he had received his answer and applied for his passports;³ but the king was unwilling that he should leave court before he had completely organised the scheme for his delivery. Of all these intrigues Walsingham was fully aware: for De la Motte Fenelon, in passing through London,⁴ had informed Fowler of the great coalition against the Ruthven lords; and Fowler, of whose treacherous practices the ambassador had no suspicion, told all again to Walsingham.⁵ It appeared, from these revelations, that La Motte had in his pocket, to be presented to his master the French king, a list of the most powerful noblemen of Scotland who had banded together for the king's delivery. These were the Earls of Huntly, Arran, Athole, Montrose, Rothes, Morton, Eglinton, Bothwell, Glencairn, and Crawford, with the Lords Hume and Seton. The young king himself had secretly assured La Motte Fenelon "that, although he had two eyes, two ears, and two hands, he had but one heart, and that was French;"⁶ and so successfully had De Menainville laboured, that he had not only strengthened his own faction, but sown such distrust and jealousy

¹ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1257. State-paper Office, April 1583, Instructions to Colonel Stewart.

² Instructions to Colonel Stewart, *ut supra*.

³ Calderwood MS., fol. 1265.

⁴ La Motte arrived in London about the 20th February 1582-3. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, February 20, 1582-3.

⁵ State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, March 28, 1583.

⁶ State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison and Bowes, March 9, 1582-3. Orig. Minute.

amongst its opponents, that Gowrie, their chief leader, began to tremble for his safety, and vacillate in his fidelity to his former associates.¹

At this moment, Rocio Bandelli, Menainville's confidential servant, who was carrying his letters to Mauvissiere, his brother ambassador at the English court, betrayed his trust, opened the despatches, and gave copies of them to Sir Robert Bowes, who immediately communicated their contents to Walsingham. The young king, it appeared by their contents, had been urged to explode the mine, and at once destroy the lords who held him in durance; but he dreaded to lose Elizabeth's favour, and was convinced that a premature attempt would ruin all. His wish was to dissemble matters till the return of his ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Colvile, from the mission to England; and they had not yet left Scotland. Mauvissiere, in the meantime, had warned Menainville that Stewart, whose passion was money, was likely to betray him; and his reply is so characteristic that I insert it:—
 “As to him who comes into England,” (he means Stewart,) “all your reasons, as far as my judgment goes, militate against your own opinion. For if it is his trade to be treacherous to all the world, why should he be unfaithful to me more than to any other? He loves money: granted; but to take my gold does not hinder him from receiving another's. May we not hope that such a man will do more for two sums than for one? He is a party man: I admit it; but shew me any man who has his own fortune at heart, and does not trim with the times. His chief interest lies in England, believe me, much less than in another place which you wot of, where he may hope to gain more by a certain way in which I have instructed him, (in which he will shew you,) than by any other service in the world. For the rest, the game is a good game.”²

¹ State-paper Office, Copie de la Premiere Lettre, endorsed, Menainville to La Motte; but I think the letter is written to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583.

² Copy, State-paper Office, Menainville to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583. The original is

It must have been tantalising to Walsingham, whose unceasing exertions had thus detected the plots of the French court in Scotland, to find that all their efforts to defeat them, and keep the English party together, were ruined by Elizabeth's extreme parsimony. In other matters, not involving expense, she was active and vigorous enough. Holt, the Jesuit, who was engaged in secret transactions with the Scottish Catholics, had been seized at Leith; and Elizabeth strongly recommended that he should be, as she expressed it, “substantially examined, and forced, by torture,” to discover all he knew.³ She wrote to Gowrie, and to the young king;⁴ she urged her busy agent, Bowes, to press Menainville's departure; but the moment that Burghley, the lord chancellor, and Walsingham, recommended the instant advance of ten thousand pounds to counteract the French influence in Scotland, “she did utterly mislike such a point,” (to use Walsingham's words,) “because it cast her into charges.”⁵ Of this sum one-half was to be given to the young king, and the rest expended upon the nobility, and the entertainment of a resident minister at the Scottish court; but, when moved in the business, the queen would not advance a farthing.

About this same time, and shortly before the Scottish ambassadors set out for England, the captive Queen of Scots, worn out with her long imprisonment, and weary of the perpetual dangers and anxieties to which the efforts of the Catholic party exposed her, renewed her negotiations with Elizabeth. Some months before this she had addressed a pathetic and eloquent appeal to that princess, imploring her to abate the rigour of her confinement, to withdraw support from the rebels who kept her son in durance,

in French. Also State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, March 28, 1583.

³ State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, April 15, 1583.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Gowrie to Elizabeth, April 24, 1583.

⁵ Ibid., Walsingham to Bowes, March 2, 1582-3. Also Fowler to Walsingham, State-paper Office, April 1583.

and to listen to the sincere offers she had so repeatedly made for an accommodation. Some of the passages in this letter were so touchingly expressed, that it is difficult to believe even the cold and politic heart of the English queen could have been insensible to them; but there were others so cuttingly ironical, and at the same time so true, that we cannot wonder the epistle remained, for a considerable time, unanswered.¹ At length, however, Elizabeth despatched Mr Beal, one of her confidential servants, a strict Puritan, and a man of severe saturnine temper, to confer with the imprisoned queen. It may be doubted whether she had any serious intentions of listening to Mary; but she was anxious, before she received the ambassadors, Stewart and Colvile, to probe her feelings, and ascertain how far there existed any mutual confidence between her and her son; and Beal's letters to Walsingham present us with an interesting picture of this conference. Lord Shrewsbury had been associated with him in the negotiation, of which he gave this account to the English secretary:—"Since our last despatch," said he, "this earl and I have once repaired unto this lady; and whilst he went out to meet some gentlemen of the country at the cock-fight, it pleased her to spend some part of the afternoon in talk with me, of sundry matters of the estate of Scotland. . . . In conclusion, she solemnly protested, before Nau,² that she and her son would do anything they could to deserve her majesty's favour; and said that she was not so irreligious and careless of her honour and the force of an oath, as either before God or man she should be found to break that which she had promised; and she added, that she was now old, and that it was not for her now to seek any ambition or great estate, either in the one realm or the other, as in her youth she might; but only desired to live the rest of the small time of her life in quietness, in

some honourable sort: she said she was diseased, and subject to many sicknesses, albeit, these many winters, she never was so well as she was this. She had a great heart which had preserved her, and desired now to be at rest, by the making of some good accord with her majesty, her son, and herself."

Beal then told Mary that, in his opinion, such an agreement or association as had been contemplated was not desired in Scotland, either by the young king or the nobility.

"For the nobility," said she, "all that might hinder it are already gone. I have offended none of them which are now remaining; and therefore I doubt not but they will like thereof. These are principally to be doubted: Lindsay, Gowrie, Lochleven, Mar, and Angus. Lindsay is a hasty man, and was never thought to be of any great conduct or wit; and if he would do anything to the contrary, the way to win him was, to suffer him to have a few glorious words in the beginning, and afterwards he would be wrought well enough. In the association passed between her and her son," she said, "all former offences done to her were pardoned;" adding, "that whatsoever account her majesty now maketh of Gowrie, his letters unto the Duke of Guise, sent by one Paul, which brought certain horses unto her son into Scotland, can declare that he will yield unto anything—she marvelleth how her majesty dared trust him;" and said, "that because the Earl Morton did not, in a particular controversy that was between him and Lord Oliphant, do what he would, he was the cause of his death. . . . Therefore," she said, "there was no stability or trust in him. Lochleven hath" (as she said) "made his peace already. Mar was her godchild, and, in her opinion, like to prove a coward and a naughty-natured boy. . . . Angus had never offended her, and therefore she wished him no evil; but his surname never had been friends to the Stewarts, and she knew the king her son loved him not. . . . Touching her son," she observed, "that he was cunning enough not to

¹ It will be found, with a translation, in Whitaker, vol. iv. p. 401.

² Monsieur Nau, Mary's secretary.

declare himself openly, in respect of hissurety and danger of his life, being in his enemies' hands ; and what," said she, " will you say if his own letters can be shewed to that effect ?" On another occasion, some days later, she confirmed this; observing that, although James might appear to be satisfied with Gowrie and the rest, he only dissembled and waited his time, and must seek some foreign support if he did not embrace England, as he was too poor a king to stand alone against such a nobility ; besides, Monsieur la Motte had told her he was well grown, and his marriage could not be delayed more than a year or two. " His father was married when he was but nineteen years old, and the Duke of Lorraine when he was but sixteen. . . . As to herself, she was sure," she said, " of a great party amongst the Scottish nobles, and had a hundred of their bands to maintain her cause, on the occurring of any good opportunity ; yet she desired no ambitious estate, either in that country or this, but only her majesty's favour, and liberty."¹

Elizabeth having thus elicited as much as possible from Mary, and even procured from the captive princess some offers which might open the way to the recovery of her liberty, communicated all that had passed to Bowes, her ambassador at the Scottish court ; and commanded him, in a secret interview with the young king, to sound his feelings regarding the restoration of his mother to liberty, and her association with himself in the government.² The matter was to be managed with the utmost secrecy ; and the English queen was so anxious to receive an instant answer, that Walsingham recommended Bowes to set a gallows upon the packet, as he had done on his own ; a significant hint sometimes given in those times to dilatory couriers.³ In all this, Eliza-

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Papers of Mary, queen of Scots, April 17, 1583. Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham. Also April 22, 1583, same to same.

² Minute, State-paper Office, April 25, 1583, Walsingham to Bowes.

³ Ibid., April 26, 1583.

beth had no serious intention of either delivering her captive, or permitting her to be associated with her son : her wish was to defeat the whole scheme, by making the young prince jealous of his mother ; and in this she appears to have succeeded. It is certain, at least, that in his secret interview with the English ambassador, James expressed himself with much suspicion and selfishness ; and when Bowes shewed him the paper containing Mary's offers to Elizabeth, he animadverted upon them with so much severity and acuteness, that, had the ambassador himself been the critic, we could scarcely have expected a more determined disapproval. Thus, in pointing to the eighth article, which related to their being jointly associated in the government, he doubted, he said, that some prejudice might come to him, as well at home as otherwise ; since it seemed so worded, that she should not only be equal with him in authority and power, but also have the chief place before him : a matter dangerous to his state and title to this crown. Besides, he observed, sundry obstacles might be found in the person of his mother, which might annoy both him and her. She was a Papist ; she had a council resident in France, by whom she was directed ; she was so entangled with the Pope, and others her confederates, that she could not deliver herself from suspicion. In honour she could not abandon her friends in France ; and as, in the person of Queen Mary, (alluding to Elizabeth's predecessor,) he said, it was found, and seen to the world, that her own mild nature could not suppress the great cruelty of her counsellors, but that their desire prevailed to persecute and torment God's people ; to overthrow the whole state and government established by King Edward the Sixth ; . . . so the Protestants and others in England, desiring a peaceable government and estate, might both doubt to find the like effects in the person of his mother, and be affrayed to come under the rule of a woman thus qualified. These impediments and dangers, he

added complacently, would not be found in his own condition, but rather an expectation of good parts or qualities promising better contentment and satisfaction. He then, at Bowes's request, gave him the whole history of the correspondence between himself and the captive queen; expressed the deepest gratitude to Elizabeth for this confidential communication; and concluded by assuring him that, as he was convinced Mary preferred herself before him in this proposal, till he saw much more clearly than he yet could, the bottom of the business, and her true meaning, he would go no further without communicating with the English queen, and taking the advice of his council; whose opinion he could not now have, on account of the solemn promise of secrecy to Elizabeth.¹

It is evident, through the whole of this negotiation, that James, if he expressed his real feelings, had a single eye to his own interest; and cared little what became of his unfortunate mother, provided he secured an undivided sceptre in Scotland, and his succession to the English crown on Elizabeth's death. One only thing may be suggested in his defence: it is just possible that, in all this he dissembled, with the object of blinding Elizabeth and Bowes to his purposes for the recovery of his liberty and the overthrow of the English faction. But of this, the result will enable us more truly to judge.

In the beginning of May, Menainville, having fully organised the plot for the overthrow of the Ruthven lords and the return of the Duke of Lennox to power, took shipping from Leith for the court of France; and so confidently did he express himself to his secret friends, that Bowes, who had a spy amongst them, told Walsingham he might look for a new world in August.² At the same time, the Scottish ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Mr John Colvile, accom-

panied by Mr David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who went at James's special request, repaired to London, where they were banqueted by Leicester, and soon admitted to an audience by Elizabeth. This princess was, as usual, profuse in her professions and advice to her young cousin the King of Scots, but exceedingly parsimonious of her money.³ On the subject of his marriage, upon which he had solicited her advice, she promised to write herself; but referred all other points to her council. It was urged by Colvile, in the strongest terms, that the king's person could not be deemed in safety, unless the Scottish guard were increased. By this he meant, in plain language, that James could not be kept in captivity without a larger body of hired soldiers to hold the opposite faction in check. In them, to use the words of the ambassadors, "the life of the cause consisted."⁴ And yet Elizabeth could scarcely be prevailed on to advance the paltry sum of three hundred pounds, which she insisted Bowes must pay upon his own credit: and "if," said Walsingham, when he sent him her commands in this matter, "her Majesty should happen to lay the burden upon you, I will not fail to see you myself discharged of the same."⁵ It had been one great purpose of Colonel Stewart, in this embassy, to ascertain whether most could be gained by the proffered friendship of England or France. He knew that the first object of his master the young king, was to strike the blow which should restore him to liberty: but this once secured, there remained the ulterior question, whether he should then "run the French or the English course." And if the English queen had been content to relieve James of the load of debt which overpowered

¹ MS., State-paper Office, original minute, Walsingham to Bowes, May 9, 1583. MS. Calderwood, British Museum, fol. 1266. Also MS., State-paper Office, Heads of Advice to be given to the King of Scots.

² MS., State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, May 7, 1583.

³ MS., State-paper Office, minute, Walsingham to Bowes, May 9, 1583. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XII.

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 1, 1583.

² MS. State paper Office, April 24, 1583. Bowes to Walsingham. *Ibid.*, May 1, 1583, same to same.

him ; if she had frankly communicated with him on the succession, and given him her advice upon his marriage ; there was every probability that he would have continued at her devotion. Only two days after the Scottish ambassadors had left court on their return, Bowes wrote from Edinburgh to Walsingham, that the Earls of Huntly, Athole, Montrose, and other barons, had met at Falkland ; and their "purpose to welter¹ the court and state" was no secret ; and that nothing but a satisfactory message from their royal mistress could save the English faction, and prevent a change of government.² Yet all this did not alter the resolution of the English queen. It was in vain that the ambassadors remonstrated with Walsingham ; that they reminded him of the promises made by the queen to the lords who had seized the king at Ruthven ; of the exhortations sent them, at the beginning of the action, to be constant ; of the assurances given to them of assistance both in men and money.³ Gowrie found himself cheated out of the sums he had spent upon the common cause : and perceiving the course which things must take, determined to make his peace with James on the first occasion. Bowes's advances to the English faction were discouraged ; and Walsingham bitterly complained that even the wretched three hundred pounds, which he had given from his own pocket, would turn out to be a dead loss to the ambassador, if he looked for payment to her majesty, and not to himself. "Thus, you see," said he, "notwithstanding it importeth us greatly to yield all contentment to that nation, [Scotland,] how we stick at trifles ! I pray God we perform the rest of things promised."⁴

At this crisis, intelligence arrived of the death of the Duke of Lennox in

France.⁵ He had been for some time in delicate health ; but the Scottish king had looked forward with confidence to his recovery, and his grief was extreme. His feelings became more poignant when he found the deep affection which his favourite had expressed towards himself on his death-bed : enjoining his eldest son to carry his heart to his royal master in Scotland ; and dying, apparently, in the Reformed faith. On the day of his death he addressed a letter to James, informing him that his recovery was hopeless ; and advising him to trust no longer to Angus, Mar, Lindsay, or Gowrie, whom he suspected were devoted to the English faction ; but to give his confidence to those whom he termed his own party. A blank, however, had been left for their names, and he expired before it was filled up.⁶

This event threw an obstacle in the way of the immediate execution of that plot for his liberty, which the young king had been so long concerting, and from the success of which he had so fondly looked forward to the restoration of his favourite.⁷ Elizabeth seized this interval again to sound the king, and some of the leading men in Scotland, regarding those recent negotiations which had been carried on with the captive queen for her restoration to liberty, and her intended "association" with her son. Both prince and council treated the idea with repugnance. James observed to Bowes, that although, as a dutiful son, he was ready to exert himself to procure the comfort and liberty of his mother, he was neither bound to this scheme of an "association," as she had asserted, nor would he ever consent to it in the form which she had proposed. The councillors were still more violently opposed to Mary on both points. "The association," they

¹ To welter ; to throw the government into a state of movement and disturbance.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, May 31, 1583.

³ Ibid., Colvile and Stewart to Walsingham, May 18, 1581.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, May 29, 1583.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, Tuesday, 1583.

⁶ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1268, 1269. Also MS., State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, June 12, 1583.

⁷ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, June 5, 1583.

said, "had been proposed in Moray's regency, and absolutely rejected; and they were confident it would meet the same fate now; and for her liberty, if, under restraint, she could keep up so strong a faction, what would she do when free?"¹

This secret consultation between the English ambassador and the king took place at Falkland on the 24th June; and so completely had James blinded Bowes, that he left court and returned to the capital, unsuspecting of any change. Next day, John Colville, who, with Colonel Stewart, had just returned from England, assured Walsingham "that all things were quiet, and that the last work of God, in the duke's departure, had increased the friendly disposition of the king."² But the letters were still on their way to England when all these flattering hopes were overthrown, and the ambassador received the astounding intelligence that the king had thrown himself into the castle of St Andrews; that the gates of the place were kept by Colonel Stewart and his soldiers; that none of the nobility had been suffered to enter, but such as were privy to the plot; and that the Earls of Crawford, Huntly, Argyle, and Marshal, were already with the monarch. On the heels of this news came a horseman in fiery speed from Mar to Angus; and this earl, the moment he heard of the movement, despatched a courier by night with his ring to Bothwell, urging him to gather his Borderers and join him instantly; which he did. But the two barons were met, within six miles of St Andrews, by a herald, who charged them, on pain of treason, to disband their forces, and come forward singly. They obeyed, rode on, saw James, and received his orders to return home and remain at their houses till he called for them.³

A few days shewed that this sudden,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Edinburgh, June 29, 1583.

² Ibid., Colvile to Walsingham, June 25, 1583.

³ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1270. Angus's messenger arrived on the Lord's day at night. MS. Letter, Bowes to Walsingham, June 29, 1583, Bowes's Letter-book.

though bloodless, revolution was complete. The king was his own master, and owed his freedom to the ability with which he had organised the plot and blinded his adversaries.⁴ Gowrie, Mar, and Angus, the three lords who had led the faction of England, and kept him in durance, were in despair; but Gowrie, more politic than his associates, had secured a pardon for himself some time before the crisis.⁵ His colleagues in the triumvirate fled; and to crown all, Arran, who, there is every reason to believe, had been privy to the whole, after a brief interval returned to court, was embraced by the king, and soon resumed all his pride and ascendancy.⁶

It was now nearly ten months since the raid of Ruthven; and as James had dissembled his feelings as long as he remained in the power of the leaders of that bold enterprise, the world looked not for any great severity against them. But the insult had sunk deeper than was believed; and it was soon evident that the king had determined to convince his people that the person of the monarch and the laws of the land should neither be invaded nor broken with impunity. A proclamation was set forth,⁷ which characterised the enterprise at Ruthven as treason; and whilst it assured his subjects that all who acknowledged their offence should experience the mercy of their prince, avowed his resolution to proceed vigorously against the impenitent and refractory. At the same time, he published a declaration "of the good and pleasant death in the Lord" of his late dear cousin the Duke of Lennox; informing his subjects that this nobleman had departed in the profession of the true Christian faith established

⁴ MS. Letter, Bowes's Letter-book, Bowes to Walsingham, July 3, 1583.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1583. Calderwood MS., fol. 1273.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 5, 1583.

⁷ MS., State-paper Office, copy of the proclamation, July 30, 1583. Also Spottiswood, p. 326. Also Bowes to Walsingham, July 31, 1583.

within his realm in the first year of his reign; and denouncing penalties upon all who pretended ignorance of this fact, or dared to contradict it, in speaking or in writing, in prose or rhyme.¹

This public vindication of the memory and faith of his favourite, was intended to silence the ministers of the Kirk, who had deemed it their duty to cast out some injurious speeches against the duke; one of them affirming that, as he thirsted for blood in his lifetime, so he died in blood:² an allusion to the disease of which he was reported to have fallen the victim. This harsh attack upon his favourite justly and deeply offended the king; and Lawson, the author of the calumny, having been commanded to appear at court, he and a small company of his brother ministers repaired to Dunfermline, and were conducted into the presence-chamber. Here, owing to the recent changes, they found themselves surrounded with the strange faces of a new court. Soon after the king entered, and whilst they rose and made their obeisance, James, to their astonishment, took not the slightest notice, but passing the throne, which all expected he was to occupy, sat down familiarly upon a little coffer, and "eyed them all marvellous gravely, and they him, for the space of a quarter of an hour; none speaking a word; to the admiration of all the beholders."³ The scene, intended to have been tragic and awful, was singularly comic; and this was increased when the monarch, without uttering a syllable, jumped up from his coffer and, "glooming" upon them, walked out of the room. It was now difficult to say what should be done. The ministers had come with a determination to remonstrate with their sovereign against the recent changes; and he, it was evident, enraged at their late conduct, had resolved to dismiss them unheard;

¹ State-paper Office, copy of the proclamation for Lennox, July 27, 1583. Also MS. Letter, Bowes's Letter-book, July 31, 1583, Bowes to Walsingham.

² MS. Calderwood, fol. 1270.

³ Ibid.

but, whilst they debated in perplexity, he relented in the cabinet, to which he had retired, and called them in. Pont then said they had come to warn him against alterations. "I see none," quickly rejoined the king; "but there were some this time twelvemonth," (alluding to his seizure at Ruthven:) "where were your warnings then?"—"Did we not admonish you at St Johnston?" answered Pont. "And, were it not for our love to your grace," interrupted Mr David Ferguson, "could we not easily have found another place to have spoken our minds than here?" This allusion to their licence in the pulpit made the king bite his lip; and the storm was about to break out, when the same speaker threw oil upon the waters, by casting in some merry speeches. His wit was of a homely and peculiar character. James, he said, ought to hear him, if any; for he had demitted the crown in his favour. Was he not Ferguson, the son of Fergus the first Scottish king? and had he not cheerfully resigned his title to his grace, as he was an honest man and had possession? "Well," said James, "no other king in Europe would have borne at your hands what I have."—"God forbid you should be like other European kings!" was the reply; "what are they but murderers of the saints?—ye have had another sort of upbringing: but beware whom ye choose to be about you; for, helpless as ye were in your cradle, you are in deeper danger now."—"I am a Catholic king," replied the monarch, "and may choose my own advisers." The word Catholic was more than some of the ministers could digest, and would have led to an angry altercation, had not Ferguson again adroitly allayed their excited feelings. "Yes, brethren," said he, turning to them, "he is a catholic—that is, a universal king; and may choose his company as King David did, in the hundred and first Psalm." This was a master stroke; for the king had very recently translated this psalm into English metre, and Ferguson took occasion to commend his verses in the highest terms. They

then again warned him against his present councillors; and one of the ministers, stooping down, had the boldness to whisper in his ear that there was no great wisdom in keeping his father's murderers, or their posterity, so near his person. Their last words were stern and solemn. "Think not lightly, sir," said they, "of our commission; and look well that your deeds agree with your promises, for we must damn sin in whoever it be found; nor is that face upon flesh that we may spare, in case we find rebellion to our God, whose ambassadors we are. Disregard not our threatening; for there was never one yet in this realm, in the place where your grace is, who prospered after the ministers began to threaten him." At this the king was observed to smile, probably ironically, but he said nothing; and, as they took their leave, he laid his hand familiarly on each. Colonel Stewart then made them drink, and they left the court.¹ I have given this interview at some length, as it is strikingly characteristic both of the prince and the ministers of the Kirk.

On receiving intelligence of the revolution in Scotland, Elizabeth wrote, in much alarm, to Bowes,² and resolved to send an ambassador with her advice and remonstrance to the king. She hesitated, however, between Lord Hunsdon her cousin, and the now aged Walsingham; and two months were suffered to pass before she could be brought to a decision. During this interval all was vigour upon the part of the king and Arran, whilst despondency and suspicion paralysed and divided their opponents. Angus, the head of the house of Douglas, and one of the most powerful noblemen in the country, was banished beyond the Spey;³ Mar and Glammis were ordered to leave the country;⁴ the Laird of Lochleven was imprisoned, and commanded to deliver his houses to Rothes; Lord Boyd and Colvile of

¹ MS., Calderwood, fol. 1272.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, July 10, 1583, Walsingham to Bowes.

³ Spottiswood, p. 326.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, September 19, 1583.

Easter Wemyss retired to France; whilst, on the other hand, the friends of the Queen of Scots, and those who had been all along attached to the interests of France, saw themselves daily increasing in favour and promoted to power. Those officers of the king's household who were suspected of being favourable to England were removed, to make way for others of the opposite party. It was observed that James had given a long secret conference to young Graham of Fintry, a devoted Catholic, lately come from France, with letters (as Bowes believed) from the Duke of Guise.⁵ It was even noted that a present of apples and almonds had been sent from Menainville to the king; a token concerted to shew that all was ripe for the completion of the plot which he had devised when last in Scotland.⁶ In short, although the young king continued to make the fairest professions to Bowes, and addressed a letter to Elizabeth, in which he expressed the greatest devotion to her service, and the most anxious desire to preserve the amity between the two kingdoms, it was evident to this ambassador that all was false and dissembled.

Amid these scenes of daily proscriptions and royal hypocrisy, the veteran statesman, Sir Francis Walsingham, arrived at the Scottish court.⁷ His instructions directed him to require satisfaction from the king regarding the late strange actions which had taken place, so inconsistent with his friendly professions to his royal mistress; he was to use every effort to persuade James to reform the accident, which the queen was ready to impute rather to evil counsel than to his own wishes; and to assure him that, if he consented to alter this new course, he should not fail to taste of her good-

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, July 27, 1583.

⁶ Ibid. Also MS., State-paper Office, July 29, 1583, Servants of the King's house discharged.

⁷ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 6, 1583. He came to Edinburgh 1st September. MS., Calderwood, fol. 1278. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XIII.

ness.¹ But it required a very brief observation to convince Walsingham that his mission was too late. He found himself treated with coldness. His audience was unnecessarily delayed; and when at last admitted, the young king was in no compliant mood, although he received him with much apparent courtesy.² To his complaints of the late changes, James replied, that he had every wish to maintain friendship with her majesty: but this he would now be better able to accomplish with a united than a divided nobility. Before this, two or three lords had usurped the government; they had engaged in dangerous courses, and had brought their ruin upon themselves. Walsingham then attempted to point out the mischief that must arise from displacing those councillors who were best affected to Elizabeth; but James sharply, and "with a kind of jollity," (so wrote the old statesman to his royal mistress,) reminded him that he was an absolute king; that he would take such order with his subjects as best liked himself;³ and that he thought his mistress should be no more curious to examine the affections of his council than he was of hers. "And yet," said Walsingham, "you are but a young prince yet, and of no great judgment in matters of government; and many an elder one would think himself fortunate to meet an adviser like my mistress. But be assured, she is quite ready to leave you to your own guidance; I have not come down to seek an alliance for England, which can live well enough without Scotland, but to charge your majesty with unkind dealing to her highness, and to seek redress for past errors."⁴ The ambassador then complained of some late outrages which had been committed by the Scots upon the Borders; and

the king having promised inquiry, and requested to see him next day in private, he took his leave. This secret conference, however, does not appear to have taken place. The probability is, that Arran, who carried himself towards Walsingham with great pride, had prevented it; and, having bid adieu to the king, the English secretary wrote to Burghley in these ominous terms:—"You will easily find that there is no hope of the recovery of this young prince; who, I doubt, (having many reasons to lead me so to judge,) if his power may agree to his will, will become a dangerous enemy. . . . There is no one thing will serve better to bridle him, than for her majesty to use the Hamiltons in such sort as they may be at her devotion."⁵

This last hint, of the use which might be made of Lord John and Lord Claud Hamilton, the sons of the late Duke of Chastelherault, who had been long in banishment, and now lived in England, was acted upon by Bowes; and brief as had been Walsingham's stay in Scotland, he had found time to sow the seeds of a counter-revolution, by which he trusted to overwhelm Arran, and place the king's person once more in the power of the friends of Elizabeth. By his advice, Bowes bribed some of the leading nobles; and in less than a week after Walsingham's departure, his busy agent wrote to him, that the good course begun by him in that realm was prosperous; that he had met with many of the persons appointed, who promised to do what was committed to them; and that already the well-affected were in comfort, and their adversaries in fear.⁶

This new plot Walsingham communicated to Elizabeth in a letter which has unfortunately disappeared, but to which he thus alluded in writing to Burghley from Durham, on his journey back to the English court:—"There is an offer made to remove

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Instructions for Sir F. Walsingham, August 13, 1583.

² MS. Letter., State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 6, 1583, Edinburgh.

³ MS. Letter, original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, September 11, 1583.

⁴ Ibid., September 11, 1583, St Johnston.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 11, 1583.

⁶ Ibid., Bowes to Walsingham, September 17, 1583.

the ill-affected from about the king, which I have sent to her majesty. They require speedy answer : and that the matter may be used with all secrecy, I beseech your lordship, therefore, that when her majesty shall make you privy thereunto, you will hasten the one and advise the other.”¹ Arran’s quick eye, however, had detected these machinations : orders were given to double the royal guards, the strictest watch was kept at court ;² and although a body of forty horse were observed one night to hover round Falkland, and all in the palace dreaded an attack, the alarm passed away. The “*Bye-course*” (the name given to the projected conspiracy) was thus abandoned ; and Elizabeth, who was dissatisfied with Walsingham’s ill success, determined to reserve her judgment on the Scottish affairs, and recalled Bowes from Scotland.³

This coldness in the English queen completely discouraged the opponents of the late revolution ; and before the end of the year, the king and Arran had triumphed over every difficulty. Angus, Mar, and Glammis, the Lairds of Lochleven and Cleish, the Abbots of Dunfermline and Cambuskenneth, with others who had acted in concert with Gowrie, were compelled to acknowledge their offences and sue for mercy ; whilst a convention was held at Edinburgh, in which the good sense and moderation of the king were conspicuous, in restoring something of confidence and peace even to the troubled elements of the Kirk.⁴ Considering the difficulty of this task, it gives us no mean idea of James’s powers at this early age, when we find him succeeding in taming the fiery and almost idomitable spirits of one party of the ministers, and reconciling

to his present policy the more placable division of the Presbyterians. The great subject of contention between the court and the Scottish clergy was the outrage committed at Ruthven ; a transaction which had received the solemn sanction of the Kirk, but which the prince, however compelled to disguise his sentiments at the time, justly considered rebellion. On this point James was firm. He had recently made every effort to bring the offenders to a confession of their crime ; and had appointed some commissioners, chosen from the ministers and the elders of the Kirk, to confer with them upon the subject.⁵ But this gentle measure not producing all the effects contemplated, a parliament was convened at Edinburgh, and an act unanimously passed, which pronounced “the surprise and restraint of the royal person” in August preceding “a crime of high treason, of pernicious example, and meriting severe punishments.” The former act of council, which had approved of it, was abrogated, as having been passed by the rebels themselves during the restraint of their sovereign ; and the king now declared his determination to punish, with the severest penalties, all who refused to sue for pardon, whilst he promised mercy to all who acknowledged their offence.⁶

These determined measures were at length successful ; and the great leaders of the faction, who had hitherto remained in sullen and obstinate resistance, submitted to the king’s mercy. Angus retired beyond the Spey ; the Earl of Mar, the Master of Glammis, with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, repaired to Ireland ; Lord Boyd, with the Lairds of Lochleven and Easter Wemyss, passed into France ; and other of their associates were imprisoned, or warded within the strictest bounds. Mr John Colvile alone, though he had been as deeply implicated as them all, refusing

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 22, 1583, Durham.

² Ibid., Bowes to Walsingham, October 22, 1583.

³ MS. State-paper Office, Elizabeth to Bowes, September 22, 1583. Also ibid., Bowes to Walsingham, October 15, 1583. Also ibid., Walsingham to Bowes, September 30, 1583, York.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 1, 1583.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 28, 1583.

⁶ MS. Act, State-paper Office, December 7, 1583.

submission, fled to Berwick;¹ whilst Gowrie, who had already obtained pardon, reiterated his vows of obedience, and remained at court.² It was impossible, however, wholly to subdue the Kirk. Mr John Durie, one of the ministers, denounced the recent proceedings in the pulpit at Edinburgh, and was followed in this course by Melvil the Principal of the college of St Andrews. But Durie was compelled, by threats of having his head set upon the West Port, one of the public gates of the city, to make a qualified retraction;³ and Melvil only saved himself from imprisonment by a precipitate flight to Berwick.⁴ This man, whose temper was violent, and who was a strict Puritan in religion and a Republican in politics, when called before the council, resolutely declined their jurisdiction; affirming that he was amenable only to the presbytery for anything delivered in the pulpit; and when the king attempted to convince him of the contrary, he arrogantly told him that "he perverted the laws both of God and man." The removal of so stern an opponent was peculiarly grateful to the court; and as James had assured the commissioners of the Kirk that he was determined to maintain the Reformed religion, and to lay before his council the remedies they recommended for restoring tranquillity to the country, it was anxiously hoped that the distracted and bleeding state might be suffered to enjoy some little interval of repose.⁵

During these transactions, the young Duke of Lennox, having left the French court, arrived in Scotland. He was accompanied by the Master of Gray, a person destined to act a conspicuous part in future years, and whom the king had expressly sent on this mission. On coming ashore, at Leith, they were met by Arran and Huntly, and carried to Kinneil, where

the court then lay. James received the son of his old favourite with the utmost joy; restored him to his father's honours and estates; and as he was then only thirteen, committed him to the government of the Earl of Montrose.⁶

It was now expected that a period of order and quiet would succeed the banishment of the disaffected lords; for although the counsels of Arran were violent, there was a wiser and more moderate party in the king's confidence, which checked, for a little while, his rashness and lust of undivided power. To this class belonged the celebrated Sir James Melvil, with his brother Sir Robert, and some of the more temperate spirits in the Kirk. One of these, Mr David Lindsay, accounted among the best of the brethren, addressed a letter at this time to Bowes, the late ambassador, in which he spoke in high terms of the young king. He advised Bowes to write to James; informed him that advice from him was sure to be well received; and added, that his royal master had recently, in private, assured him, that Secretary Walsingham was the wisest man he had ever spoken with; that the more he had pondered on the counsels he had given him, in their late meeting, the better and more profitable they appeared. "I perceive," said he to Bowes, "his majesty begins to take better tent [heed] to his own estate and weal nor [than] he has done heretofore; and espies the nature of such as rather regards their own particular, nor the quietness of this country and his majesty's welfare,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, December 29, 1583.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Spottiswood, p. 330.
⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 1, 1583.
⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 16, 1583. Ibid., same to same, Nov. 20, 1583. Spottiswood, p. 328. The affection of this prince for the family of his old favourite is a pleasing trait in his character. Nothing could make him forget them. Some time after this, two of his daughters were brought over from France, of whom he married one to the Earl of Huntly, the other to the Earl of Mar. A third was destined to an equally honourable match, but she had vowed herself to God, and could not be won from the cloister; and in later years, after his accession to the English crown, James received, with undiminished interest, the youngest son of the house, and advanced him to great honour.

which compels him to see some better order taken, and that by the advice of the most upright and discreet men that he can find in this country; for he shewed me himself, that he got counsellors enough to counsel him to wound and hurt his commonwealth, but finds very few good chirurgeons to help and heal the same, and therefore must play that part himself."¹

Little did this excellent member of the Kirk dream that, at the moment he was breathing out his own secret wishes, and those of his sovereign, for peace, into the bosoms of Bowes and Walsingham, and entreating their co-operation as peacemakers, these very men were busy getting up a new rebellion in Scotland, to which their royal mistress gave her full approval; but nothing can be more certain. The chief conspirators were the banished noblemen, Angus, Mar, the Master of Glammis, the Earl of Bothwell, Lord Lindsay, and their associates. Of these, Mar and Glammis passed over secretly from their retreat in Ireland; Angus left his refuge in the north; the two sons of the Duke of Chastelherault, Lord Claud and Lord John Hamilton, were sent down by Elizabeth from England to the Borders; whilst Gowrie, who, to cover his purposes of treason, had sought and obtained the king's licence to visit the continent, lingered in Scotland to arrange the plan of the insurrection.² In England, the great agent, in communicating with Walsingham and Bowes, was the same Mr John Col-

vile with whom we are already acquainted; and his letters, as well as those which yet remain of Bowes and Walsingham, admit us into the secrets of the conspiracy, and distinctly shew the approval of the English queen and her ministers. Gowrie, as it appears, had hesitated for some time between submitting to the king and embarking in the plot; but Bowes wrote to Walsingham, on the 4th March 1583-4, that he had abandoned all thoughts of concession, and stood faithful to his friends. He added, that the ground and manner of the purpose was known to very few, as it was thought requisite to keep it secret till the time of the execution approached. Some delay, however, took place regarding the course to be pursued with a certain bishop, who was considered too powerful an antagonist to be continued in power; and Colvile, who managed the plot in London, had a secret meeting with Walsingham on this delicate point; after which, he wrote to him in these words:—"Concerning the bishop, the more I think of the matter, the more necessity I think it, that he, and all other strangers of his opinion, were removed; for it is a common proverb, *Hostes si intus sint, frustra clauduntur fores; neque antequam expellantur tute cubandum est.*"³ But although Bowes, Walsingham, and Colvile were no mean adepts in planning an insurrection, they had to compete with an antagonist in Arran, who detected and defeated all their machinations. His eyes were in every quarter: not a movement taken by Gowrie, or Mar, or Glammis, escaped him. He was aware that a band had been drawn up, and signed by many of his enemies in Scotland, by which they solemnly engaged to assassinate him, and compelled the king to admit them to his councils.⁴ He had received information that, in the end of March,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr David Lindsay to Mr Bowes, Leith, November 2, 1583. See an account of Mr David Lindsay, in Lord Lindsay's "Lives of the Lindsays," vol. i. pp. 215-217; a most interesting and agreeable work, privately printed by that nobleman.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, January 20, 1583-4. Explained, as to the meaning of the ciphers, by the letter of Bowes to Walsingham, State-paper Office, December 29, 1583. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, January 24, 1583-4. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, February 13, 1583-4. Also State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Walsingham, March 28, 1584. Also MS., Calderwood, British Museum, 4736, fol. 1315.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Bowes, March 23, 1583-4. This must, I think, have been either Bishop Adamson, or Montgomery bishop of Glasgow.

⁴ Historie of James the Sext, p. 203. Also MS., Calderwood, British Museum, 4736, Ayscough, fol. 1316.

a general assembly of the nobles, who trusted to overturn the government, would be held at Perth. But he awaited their operations with indifference; for he knew that the Earls of Glencairn and Athole, upon whom Gowrie, Angus, and Mar principally depended, were traitors to their own friends, and had already revealed everything to him. When the meeting accordingly did take place, and the insurgent noblemen called upon all who were solicitous for the advancement of the Word of God, and the setting forth of His glory, to join their banner, their appeal found no response in the hearts of the people, and the assembly fell to pieces without striking a blow.¹

This premature movement, and its ill success, intimidated the conspirators, and gave new courage to Arran and the king, who sent a secret messenger to Elizabeth, offering the most favourable terms of accommodation, and assuring her that, in supporting Gowrie and his friends, she was the dupe of some dangerous and unquiet spirits, whose purposes varied every month, and who were not even true to each other.² The queen hesitated. Colvile had recently received from his brother, the Laird of Cleish, one of the conspirators, certain articles of agreement between them and the English queen, which they expected to be signed. These he was to correct and present to Elizabeth. But this princess was in a dilemma. If she signed the articles, she bound herself to the faction; and should they be discomfited, she furnished evidence of her encouraging rebellion in subjects; an accusation which Arran and his friends would not be slow to use. On the other hand, Colvile maintained that the late failure at Perth was to be ascribed to

the folly and impatience of some of their friends; and that now all was ready for the outbreak and success of the great plot. Gowrie was at Dundee, waiting only for the signal from his fellow-conspirators. Angus, Mar, and Glammis were ready to rise and march upon Stirling. If they succeeded, the power, probably the life, of Arran was at an end; a new order of things must be established in Scotland; and the men whom she had just deserted would be in possession once more of the person of the young king, and rule all. At this crisis, this busy partisan, Colvile, exerted himself to the utmost. He found that the English queen, whilst she verbally gave her warm approval to the insurgents, "expressing her gracious and motherly care of the well-doing of the noblemen," steadily refused either to sign their articles, or to receive any messenger from them, till they were openly in arms. He implored them to be contented with these general assurances; and declared that immediate action, without sending any further advertisements to England, could alone secure success. The examples by which he confirmed this argument were the murder of Riccio, the seizure of Queen Mary at Faside, and the recent "raid of Ruthven."

"If," said he, "advertisements had been sent to England before the execution of Davie, the taking of the Queen at Faside, and of Arran at Ruthven, I think none of these good actions had ever been effectuate. But you know, that after all these enterprises were execute, her majesty ever comforted the enterprisers thereof in all lawful manner, albeit she was not made privy to their intentions. Chiefly after the late attempt at Ruthven, it is fresh remembrance how timeously Sir George Carey and Mr Robert Bowes, her majesty's ambassadors, arrived to countenance the said cause. But now, when men does nothing but sit down to advise when it is high time to draw sword and defend, and will lie still in the mire unstirring, and expecting till some friend passing by shall pull them out, it appears well

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 5, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 10, 1584. Also ibid., same to same, fol. 3, Berwick, April 5, 1584. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Walsingham, April 2, 1584.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to his brother, the Laird of Cleish, April 18, 1584. Endorsed by Cecil, "Mr Colvile;" and by Colvile himself, "Copy of my last letter sent to Scotland."

that they either difide in the equity of their cause, or else are bewitched, and so useless, and that they can feel nothing till they be led to the shambles, as was the poor Earl of Morton.¹ If," he proceeded, "matters were resolutely ordered, what more consultation is needed, (seeing religion, the king's honour, and all good men is in extreme danger,) but first courageously, such as are agreed, to join together in secret manner for the king's deliverance, as was done at Ruthven; or if this cannot be, then to convene at some convenient place openly, publish proclamation to the people for declaration of their lawful and just cause, and so pursue the present adversaries till either they were apprehended or else reduced to some extremity."²

When Colvile spoke of the poor Earl of Morton being led to the shambles, he little thought how soon his words were to prove prophetic in the miserable fate of Gowrie: but so it happened. Arran, who was informed of every particular, had quietly suffered the plot to proceed to the very instant of its execution. Having secretly instructed his own friends to be ready with their forces at an instant's warning, he did not move a step till his adversaries were in the field, and, by an overt act, had fixed upon themselves the crime of rebellion. The moment this was ascertained, and when he knew that Gowrie only waited at Dundee for a signal to join his friends, who were advancing upon Stirling, he despatched Colonel Stewart to arrest him; who, with a hundred troopers, coming suddenly to that town before sunrise, surrounded his castle. It was difficult, however, in these times of feudal misrule and hourly danger to find a Scottish baron unprepared; and the earl bravely held his house against all assailants for twelve hours. But he was at last overpowered, seized, and carried a pri-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, April 16, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother. Colvile's ignorance of the *secret* history of Riccio's murder is striking. See vol. iii. of this History, pp. 215-217.

² Ibid., April 16, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother.

soner to Edinburgh.³ At the same moment that these scenes were acting at Dundee, word had been brought to the court, that the Earls of Mar and Angus, with the Master of Glamis and five hundred horse, had entered Stirling, and possessed themselves of the castle; and when Stewart entered Edinburgh with his captive, he found it bristling with arms and warlike preparations; the drums beating, and the young king, in a high state of excitement, assembling his forces, hurrying forward his levies, and declaring that he would instantly proceed in person against them.⁴ So soon were the musters completed, that within two days an army of twelve thousand men were in the field; and James, surrounded by his nobles, led them on to Stirling. These mighty exertions, however, were superfluous. The insurgent lords did not dare to keep together in the face of such a force; and leaving a small garrison in the castle of Stirling, fled precipitately through east Teviotdale into England, and solicited the protection of Elizabeth.⁵ As they passed Kelso in the night, Bothwell, their old friend, met them, and held a secret conference; but as such a meeting with traitors might have cost him his head, they agreed that at daybreak he should chase them across the Border; which he did, acting his part in this counterfeit pursuit with much apparent heat and fury.⁶ James then took possession of Stirling; the castle surrendered on the first summons; four of the garrison, including the captain, were hanged; Archibald Douglas, called the constable, was also executed; and it was soon seen that the utmost rigour was intended against all connected with the conspiracy.⁷

As its authors were the chief lead-

³ MS. Letter, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 9, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 19, 1584.

⁴ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 13, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 23, 1584. Ibid., fol. 13*, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 26, 1584.

⁵ MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1321. ⁶ Ibid.

⁷ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, May 7, 1584.

ers of the Protestant faction, and its objects professed to be the preservation of religion and the maintenance of the true Word of God, it was suspected that the ministers of the Kirk were either directly or indirectly implicated. Of these, three—Mr Andrew Hay, Mr James Lawson, and Mr Walter Balcanquel—were summoned to court; and two in particular—Galloway, minister of Perth, and Carmichael, minister of Haddington—were searched for at their houses by the king's guard, but could not be found. They afterwards, with Polwart, sub-dean of Glasgow, John Davison, minister of Libberton, and the noted Andrew Melvil, fled to England.¹

In the meantime, it was determined to bring Gowrie to trial. Of his guilt there was not the slightest doubt. He had been a chief contriver of the plot, and the most active agent in its organisation: but there was some want of direct evidence; and a base device, though common in the criminal proceedings of these times, was adopted to supply it. The Earl of Arran, attended by Sir Robert Melvil, and some others of the privy councillors, whose names do not appear, visited him in prison; and professing great concern for his safety, informed him that the king was deeply incensed against him, believing that he had the chief hand in expelling his favourite, the Duke of Lennox. Gowrie declared, that his part in the disgrace of the duke was not deeper than that of his associates; but anxiously besought them, as old friends, to sue to the king for a favourable sentence. They replied, that to become intercessors for him in the present state of James's feelings, would only ruin themselves, and not serve him. "What, then," said he, "is to be done?"—"Our advice," said they, "is that you write a general letter to the king, confessing your knowledge of a design against his majesty's person, and offering to reveal the particulars, if admitted to an audience. This will procure you an interview, which other-

wise you have no chance of obtaining. You may then vindicate your innocence, and explain the whole to the king."—"It is a perilous expedient," answered Gowrie. "I never entertained a thought against the king; but this is to frame my own dittay,² and may involve me in utter ruin."—"How so?" said his crafty friends: "your life is safe, if you follow our counsel; your death is determined on, if you make no confession."—"Goes it so hard with me?" was Gowrie's reply. "If there be no remedy, in case I had an assured promise of my life, I would not stick to try the device of the letter."—"I will willingly pledge my honour," said Arran, "that your life shall be in no danger, and that no advantage shall be taken of your pretended confession."³ Thus entrapped, the unfortunate man wrote the letter as he was instructed; it was sent to the king, but he waited in vain for a reply; and on the trial, when the jury complained of defective evidence, and declared that they could find nothing to justify a capital condemnation, Arran, who, contrary to all justice and decency, was one of their number, drew the fatal letter from his pocket, and appealed to the accused whether he could deny his own handwriting. "It is mine assuredly," said Gowrie; "nor can I deny it; but, my lords, this letter was written, these revelations were made, on a solemn promise of my life. You must remember it all," said he, looking at Arran and turning to the lords who had accompanied him to the prison, "how at first I refused; how earnestly I asserted my innocence; how you sware to me, upon your honour and faith, that the king granted me my life, if I made this confession." The lord-advocate replied, that the lords had no power to make such a promise; and when the prisoner, with the energy of a man struggling between life and death, appealed to their oaths, these

² Dittay; accusation.

³ MS., State-paper Office, Form of certain devices used by Arran and Sir R. Melvil against Gowrie, enclosed by Davison in a letter to Walsingham, dated May 27, 1584, Berwick.

pretended friends declared that by them no such promise had been made.¹ The jury then retired to consider their verdict; and as Arran rose to leave the room, Gowrie made a last effort to remind him of old times and early friendship; but his speech fell on a cold ear: and the prisoner, apparently indifferent, calling for a cup of wine, drank, and shook hands with some of his friends around him. He sent also, by one of them, a pathetic message to his wife; begging him to conceal his fate from her, as she was just delivered of her child, and the news, if heard suddenly, might be fatal to her. At this moment the jury returned and declared him guilty, a sentence which he received with much firmness; then instantly rising to speak, the judge interrupted him, telling him that his time was short, as the king had already sent down the warrant for his execution. "Well, my lord," said he, "since it is the king's contentment that I lose my life, I am as willing to part with it as I was before to spend it in his service; and the noblemen who have been upon my jury will know the matter better hereafter. And yet, in condemning me, they have hazarded their own souls, for I had their promise. God grant my blood be not on the king's head! And now, my lords," continued the unfortunate man, "let me say a word for my poor sons. Let not my estates be forfeited. The matters are small for which I suffer. Failing my eldest boy, then, let my second succeed him." It was answered, he was found guilty of treason, and, by law, forfeiture must follow. The last scene of the tragedy was brief. He was allowed to retire for a few moments, with a minister, to his private devotions. He then walked out upon the scaffold; asserted his innocence of all designs against the king's person to the people who were assembled; repeated the account of the base artifice to which he had fallen a victim; and turning to Sir Robert Melvil, who stood beside him,

begged him to satisfy the headsman for his clothes, as he had left the dress in which he died to his page. The justice-clerk then assisted him to undo his doublet, and bare his neck; Gowrie himself tied the handkerchief over his eyes, and kneeling down, "smilingly," as it was remarked by an eye-witness, rested his head upon the block. It was severed from the body by a single blow; and his three friends, Sir R. Melvil, the justice-clerk, and Stewart of Traquair, wrapping the remains in the scarlet cloth which he had himself directed to be the covering of the scaffold, had them buried, after the head had been sewed on to the body.²

Gowrie died firmly, and it is to be hoped, sincerely penitent; but, even in this dark age of unscrupulous crime and aristocratical ambition, few men had more need of repentance. His early age was stained with the blood of the unfortunate Riccio; he and his father being two of the principal assassins. In his maturer years, he accompanied Lindsay in that harsh and brutal interview with Mary, when they compelled her, in her prison at Lochleven, to sign the abdication of the government. Since that time, his life had been one continued career of public faction; his character was stained by a keen appetite for private revenge;³ and although all must reprobate the base contrivances resorted to, to procure evidence against him on his trial,

² MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 29. Account written by a person present at the trial.—It is difficult to reconcile the conduct of Sir Robert Melvil to Gowrie, as described by Davison, with this sentence in the above account: "He was buried by his three friends, Sir Robert Melvil, the justice-clerk, and Sir Robert Stewart of Traquair;" and we find, from the same source, that, on the scaffold, Gowrie turned to Melvil, with a last request, as if intrusting it to his dearest friend. All this makes me suspect that Melvil only *accompanied* Arran, and did not assist him in entrapping Gowrie. Yet, anxious as I was to think the best, the assertion, contained in the original paper sent by Davison to Walsingham, was too clear and direct to permit me to omit it.

³ "Quant au Compte de Gourie il ressemble toujours a luy mesme, colere et vindicatif et sur lequel peult plus la souvenance d'une injure passée, que toute autre prevoiance de l'avenir." Menainville to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583. State-paper Office.

it is certain that, in common with Mar, Angus, and Glammis, he had engaged in a conspiracy to overturn the government.¹ It is singular to find that a man thus marked so deeply with the features of a cruel age, should have combined with these considerable cultivation and refinement. He was a scholar, fond of the fine arts, a patron

of music and architecture, and affected magnificence in his personal habits and mode of living. Common report accused him of being addicted to the occult sciences; and, on his trial, one of the articles against him was his having consulted a witch; but this he treated with deep and apparently sincere ridicule.

CHAPTER IV.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1584—1586.

THE death of Gowrie, and the flight of his fellow-conspirators, left Arran² in possession of the supreme power in Scotland, and filled Elizabeth and her ministers with extreme alarm. They knew his unbounded ambition; they were aware of the influence which he possessed over the character of the young king: his former career had convinced them that his talents were quite equal to his opportunities. He combined military experience, and the promptitude and decision which a soldier of fortune so often acquires, with a genius for state affairs, and a ready eloquence, in which all could see the traces of a learned education. To this was added a noble presence and figure, with commanding manners, which awed or conciliated as he pleased those whom he employed as the tools of his greatness. Elizabeth suspected also, and on good grounds, that, although he professed a great regard for the Reformed religion,—declaring his fears lest the faction of the queen-mother should regain its influence in Scotland, and seduce the mind of the young monarch from the truth,—still these asservations were rather politic than

sincere. For their truth, she and her councillors had no guarantee; and looking to the profligacy of his private life, his bitter opposition to the Presbyterian clergy, and his constant craving after forfeitures and power, they conjectured that his alleged devotion to England, and desire to continue the amity, was rather a contrivance to gain time till he looked about him, than any more permanent principle of action.

All this was embarrassing to the English queen and her ministers; and there were other difficulties in the way of their recovery of influence in Scotland, to which it was impossible to shut their eyes. They had trusted that the late conspiracy, if successful, would restore Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton to their ancient authority and estates; and that their union with the Earl of Angus, who wielded the immense power of the house of Douglas, would enable them to crush Arran, and destroy the French faction in Scotland. But Arran was now triumphant; and his enmity to the houses of Douglas and Hamilton was deep and deadly. Their restoration, he well knew, must have been his utter ruin. He had brought the Regent Morton to the scaffold; he

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, May 12, 1584.

² Captain James Stewart, Earl of Arran.

had possessed himself of the title and estates of the unfortunate Earl of Arran; and as long as he continued in power, Elizabeth foresaw that the exiles would never be permitted to return. She had difficulties, also, with the faction of the Kirk. They had hitherto been encouraged by England; and had been employed, by Burghley and Walsingham, as powerful opponents of the French faction and the intrigues of the queen-mother. But Elizabeth had herself no sympathy for the Presbyterian form of church government: she had often blamed the factious and Republican principles disseminated by its ministers; and now, when the party of the Kirk were no longer dominant, she felt disposed to regard them with coldness and distrust.¹ On the other hand, the young king had avowed his determined enmity to Rome; whilst his opposition was simply to Presbytery as contrasted with Episcopacy. He had formed a resolution to maintain, at all risks, against the attacks of its enemies, the Episcopal form of government which had been established in Scotland. He was assisted in this great design by Arran, a man not easily shaken in his purposes; and by Adamson, archbishop of St Andrews, whose abilities were of a high order, both as a divine and a scholar; and now that Gowrie was gone, and the other great leaders of the Kirk in exile, there was every probability that James would succeed in his object. It became, therefore, a question with Elizabeth, whether she might not gain more by encouraging the advances of Arran, than she would lose by withdrawing her support from the exiled lords.

Such being her feelings, she resolved to be in no hurry to commit herself till she had sent a minister to Scotland, who should carefully examine the exact state of parties in that country. When the conspiracy broke out, Mr Davison had been on his road thither; but he was arrested on his journey, at Berwick, by letters from

Walsingham;² and when the French ambassador, who was resident at the English court, requested the queen's permission to repair to Scotland and act as a mediator between the factions, Elizabeth readily consented.³ She was the more inclined to choose this moderate course, as the King of France had recently offered to engage in a strict league with England. He had declared his earnest desire to see the three crowns united in perfect amity, and his wishes that the afflicted state of Scotland should be restored to quiet; whilst he had instructed his ambassador to visit the captive Queen of Scots, to exert himself to the utmost to mitigate the rigour of her confinement, and, if possible, to procure her restoration to liberty.⁴

In the meantime, Arran and the king, although they professed a firm resolution to maintain pacific relations with England, adopted energetic measures to secure their triumph and complete the ruin of their enemies. A parliament was held at Edinburgh,⁵ in which Angus, Mar, Glammis, and their numerous adherents, were declared guilty of treason, and their estates forfeited to the crown; whilst some laws were passed, which carried dismay into the hearts of the Presbyterian clergy, and amounted, as Davison declared to Walsingham, to the supplanting and overthrow of the government of the Kirk. The authority of the king was declared supreme in all causes, and over all persons. It was made treason to decline his judgment, and that of his council, in any matter whatsoever; the jurisdiction of any court, spiritual or temporal, which was not sanctioned by his highness and the three estates, was discharged; and no persons, of whatever function or quality, were to presume,

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, April 29, 1584.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, May 4, 1584. *Ibid.*, same to same, May 10, 1584.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, draft, Points in the French Ambassador's letter, May 13, 1584.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, June 17, 1584.

under severe penalties, to utter any slanderous speeches against the majesty of the throne, or the wisdom of the council; or to criticise, in sermons, declamations, or private conferences, their conduct and proceedings.¹ All ecclesiastical assemblies, general or provincial, were prohibited from convening; and the whole spiritual jurisdiction was declared to be resident in the bishops: the sentence of excommunication pronounced against Montgomery was abrogated; and a commission granted to the Archbishop of St Andrews, for the reformation of the university of St Andrews, a seminary of education, which was suspected to be in great need of purification from the heterodox and Republican doctrines of its exiled principal, Melvil.² To these laws it was added, that all persons who had in their possession the History of Scotland, and the work *De Jure Regni*, written by Buchanan, should bring them to the Secretary of State, to be revised and reformed by him.³

It had been suspected by the Kirk that such measures were in preparation; and Mr David Lindsay, one of the most temperate of the ministers, had been selected to carry to the king a protest against them; but before this took place, he was seized in his own house, and carried out of bed, a prisoner, to the castle of Blackness.⁴ It was alleged that he had been engaged in secret practices with England; and this created a presumption that he had been cognisant of the recent conspiracy of Gowrie. Such severity, however, did not intimidate his brethren; and when the recent acts against the Kirk were proclaimed at the Cross, on the Sunday after the rise of the parliament, Robert Pont and Balcanquel, two of the ministers of the capital, openly protested against them. Having satisfied their conscience, and warned their flock against obedience,

¹ Spottiswood, fol. 333. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., May 23, 1584.

they deemed it proper to provide for their own safety; and fled in the night, followed hard by some of the king's guard, who had orders to arrest them. They escaped, however, and entered Berwick by daybreak.⁵

Elizabeth now ordered Davison to proceed to Scotland; and the young king despatched the celebrated Sir James Melvil, who was then much in his confidence, to meet him on the Borders. Melvil's commission was to sound the ambassador's mind before he received audience; and after their meeting he despatched a letter to his brother, Sir Robert Melvil, in which he gave a minute and graphic account of their conversation, as they rode together towards the court. Davison he described as all smiles and gentleness, full of thanks for the noble train which had met him on the marches, and earnest in his hopes that he might prove a more happy instrument of amity than his diplomatic predecessors, Randolph and Bowes. Sir James's reply was politely worded, but significant and severe. He had little doubt, he said, that the intentions of the Queen of England were sincere; her offers assuredly were fair, and the rebellion of subjects against their prince could not but be hateful to her; and yet the proceedings of her councillors and ministers appeared far otherwise to clear-sighted men. As for the king his master, he was now a man both in wit and personage, and acute enough to look more to deeds than words. It is the custom (continued Melvil) of some countries to hold their neighbours in civil discord, and send ambassadors to and fro to kindle the fire under colour of concord. No words could more plainly point out the recent proceedings of Elizabeth; but Sir James was too much of a courtier not to avoid the direct application. He utterly disclaimed having that opinion of her majesty, or of the ambassador himself, that many had of *some* counsellors and ambassadors; but he assured him, unless her majesty proceeded otherwise

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

with the king than she had done yet, matters were able¹ [likely] to fall out to her unmendable discontentment. I would not speak of auld² done deeds, said he, pursuing the attack; but now lately, when Mr Walsingham was sent, his majesty was in good hope of a strait amity to be packed in respect of his own earnest inclination and the quality of him that was sent, and could find nothing but an appearance of changement of mind in him, either upon some new occasion, or by the persuasion of some other party; and, nevertheless, his majesty dealt favourably and familiarly with him, and shewed favour unto sundry that were suspected, at his request, and kept straitly some speeches that were between them; albeit afterwards Mr Bowes alleged the contrary, in such sort that sundry thought it were done to pick a quarrel. And whereas (continued Melvil, alluding to the late conspiracy of Gowrie) his majesty was mercifully inclined to all his subjects, —both they with some of England, and some of England with them had practised, whereof her majesty had some forewarning,—yet they drew to plain rebellion by them that came *het-fut*³ out of England and Ireland, and were now returned and treated there again; and then you will say, the queen loves his majesty, the queen seeks his majesty's preservation! What is this but mockery?⁴ This was a home-thrust, which Davison, who knew its truth, could not easily parry; nor was he more comfortable when Sir James alluded to the conduct of the Kirk, and the state of religion. Lord Burghley himself, said Melvil, when in Scotland at the time of the siege of Leith, had been scandalised at the proceedings of the ministers, and gave plain counsel to put order to them, or else they would subvert the whole estate; and yet

¹ "Able" is the word in the original. There is some error, however; the sense requires "likely."

² Auld; old.

³ Het-fut; hot-foot.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir James Melvil to my Lord of Pittenweem, or Sir Robert Melvil of Karny.

now, said he, they are again crying out against the king's highness, whose life and conversation is better reformed and more godly than their own. He then detailed to him more particularly, as they rode along, the "slanderous practices of some of these busy factioners;" and ended with this advice:—"Mr Ambassador,—if the queen require friendship, she must like the king's friends; she must hate his enemies; and either deliver them into his hands, or chase them forth of her country, as she did at his majesty's mother's desire after the slaughter of Davie. Your mistress need not dread the king: he is young, far more bent on honest pastime than on great handling of countries; and, unless compelled by such doings as have been carried on lately, he will keep this mind for many years yet. He is young enough [this was a glance at the succession to Elizabeth] to abide upon anything God has provided for him."⁵

The two friends by this time had reached Melvil's country seat, from which they rode to the court at Falkland, and Davison was admitted to his audience. He found the young Duke of Lennox, and the Earls of Arran, Huntly, Montrose, and other nobles, around the king, who received his letters with courtesy, but expressed himself in passionate terms against the rebellious nobles, whom, he said, he expected Elizabeth to deliver into his hands. To this Davison replied, that no one could be more tender of his estate and preservation than his mistress. As to the noblemen whom he termed rebels, she was as yet utterly ignorant of the true circumstances of the late *alteration*, (by this mild term she alluded to Gowrie's treason;) but she had always regarded these nobles as men who had hazarded their lives in his service; nor could she now deliver them, without blemish to her honour. Did his majesty forget that he had himself blamed Morton for the delivery of Northumberland in his

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir James Melvil to my Lord of Pittenweem, or Sir Robert Melvil of Karny.

minority; and had recently refused to give up Holt the Jesuit, who had been concealed in Scotland, and was a notorious intriguer against her majesty's government? Besides, she had good cause of offence from the late conduct of Livingston, his servant, whom he had sent up to require the delivery of Angus and his friends. This man had spread reports injurious to her honour; he had asserted that Gowrie had written a letter in prison, accusing Elizabeth of a plot against the life of Mary and the young king. The whole was a foul and false slander; and she knew well the stratagems which had been used to procure such a letter; but she did, indeed, think it strange that the king himself should credit such stories of one whose life and government had been as innocent and unspotted as hers, and who had shewn such care of himself, and sisterly affection to his mother.¹ For the banished noblemen, she should take good care they should create no trouble to his kingdom.

To all this James answered, with a spirit and readiness for which Davison was not prepared, that for this last assurance there was not much necessity. He could look, he hoped, well enough himself to the defence of his kingdom against such rebels as she now thought good to protect. The case of Holt, he said, was not parallel. He was a mean and single subject; they were noblemen of great houses and alliance. For Gowrie's letter, it was true such a letter had been written; but its terms were so general, as to touch neither her majesty, nor any other persons in particular: nor was the accusation ever substantiated by proof. Her majesty's honour, therefore, was unblemished. James then turned to lighter subjects, talked of his hunting and pastimes, and handed the ambassador over to Montrose, with whom he dined.²

A few days' observation convinced Davison that James felt as deeply as he had expressed himself; and that,

although Arran's power was great, the king's inclination seconded, if they did not originate, all those severe measures which were now adopted against the banished nobles and the ministers. Nothing was heard of, from day to day, but prosecutions, arrests, forfeitures, and imprisonments; whilst Arran, and the nobles and barons who had joined his party, exultingly divided the spoil. The immense estates of the family of Douglas were eagerly sought after; and Davison, in a letter to Walsingham, conveyed a striking picture of the general scramble, "with the misery and confusion of the country. The proceedings of this court," said he, "are thought so extreme and intolerable, as have not only bred a common hatred and mislike of the instruments, but also a decay of the love and devotion of the subjects to his majesty. . . . The want of their ministers exiled; the imprisonment of Mr David Lindsay in the Blackness; and the warding of Mr Andrew Hay in the north, who refused to subscribe their late acts of parliament, do not a little increase the murmur and grudging of the people; besides the lack of the ordinary ministry here, which is now only supplied by Mr John Craig and Mr John Brand, at such times as they may be spared from their own charges. The king is exceedingly offended with such of them as are fled, blaming them to have withdrawn themselves without cause, notwithstanding some of their friends were already in hands, and warrant given forth for their own charging and apprehending before their departure. Immediately upon their returning," he continued, "the Bishop of Glasgow, and Fintry, another excommunicate, came to this town, and were absolved, *jure politico*, from the sentence of excommunication, and now have liberty and access to the court. . . . The prisoners are all yet unrelieved of their wards, save Lindsay and Mr William Lesly, who, by the great suit of the Laird and Lady Johnston, hath obtained his life. The Bishop of Moray and George

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 10, 1584. Davison to Walsingham.

² Ibid.

Fleck remain in Montrose. Bothwell hath been an earnest suitor for Coldingknowes; but hath yet obtained no grace: he hath gotten the grant of Cockburnspeth; Sir William Stewart hath Douglas; the Secretary Maitland, Boncle; and the Colonel, Tantallon: all belonging to Angus, whose lady doth yet retain her dowery. The Colonel hath, besides, the tutorie of Glammis, with the Master's living. Huntly hath gotten Paisley and Buquhan's lands; Montrose, Balmanno, belonging to George Fleck; Crawford hath gotten the Abbey of Scone; Montrose the office of treasurer and the lordship of Ruthven; Arran, Dirleton, Cowsland, and Newton: all sometime belonging to Gowrie, whose wife and children are very extremely dealt withal. Athole stands on terms of interdicting, for that it is suspected he will relieve and support them. Glencairn hath taken the castle of Erskine; the Laird of Clackmannan hath spoiled Alloa, both belonging to the Earl of Mar, whose living is yet undistributed, save the lordship of Brechin, which is given to Huntly. The Laird of Johnston hath gotten Locharnell, belonging to George Douglas. The living of the rest in exile being like to follow the same course. Arran," he went on to observe, "had been promoted to the high office of chancellor; Sir John Maitland had been made secretary; Sir Robert Melvil, treasurer-depute; and Lord Fleming, lord chamberlain; whilst Adamson, the Archbishop of St Andrews, was in high favour, constantly at court, and busily occupied in his schemes for the total destruction of the Presbyterian form of church government, and in the persecution of its ministers and supporters."¹

Calm and cold as was the language of this letter, the sum of public misery and individual suffering contained in such a description must have been great and intense; and yet such scenes of proscription and havoc were too common in Scotland to make any deep impression upon Elizabeth, who, when

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

the political tools with which she worked were worn out or useless, was accustomed to cast them aside with the utmost indifference.² But her ambassador struck upon a different string, and one which instantly vibrated with alarm and anger, when he assured her that a complete revolution had taken place in the feelings of the young king towards his mother; that they kept up a constant communication; and that all the observations made by him, since his arrival in Scotland, convinced him that French politics, and the influence of the captive queen, regulated every measure at the Scottish court.³ All pointed to this. The association, concluded already, or on the point of being concluded, between them, by which Mary was to resign the kingdom to her son; the late revolution at St Andrews; the execution, exile, or imprisonment of such as had been constant in religion; the alteration of the Protestant magistracy in the burghs; the reception of English Jesuits into Scotland; the negotiations of the Scottish nobles now in power with the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, Mary's ambassadors and instruments at the court of France and Spain; the frequent intelligence between the young king and his mother; his speeches in her favour, and his impatience of hearing anything in her dispraise: all were so many facts, to which the most cursory observer could scarcely shut his eyes; and which, to use Davison's words to Walsingham, clearly demonstrated that the Scottish queen, though elsewhere in person, sat at the stern of the government, and guided both king and nobles as she pleased.⁴

This was an alarming state of things to Elizabeth. The king was now grown up: his marriage could not be long delayed. If, by his mother's influence, it took place with a daughter of France; if, to the intrigues of the Spanish faction of the Roman Catho-

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., May 28, 1584.

lies in her own realm, were to be added the revived influence of the Guises in Scotland, and an increased power of exciting rebellion in Ireland; what security had she for her crown, or even for her life? A conspiracy against her person was at this moment organising in England, for which Francis Throckmorton was afterwards executed.¹ Of its true character it is difficult to form an opinion; but whether a real or a counterfeit plot, it was enough to alarm the country. It seems certain that many Jesuits and seminary priests were busy in both kingdoms, exciting the people to rebellion. Slanderous libels, and treatises on tyrannicide, were printed and scattered about by those who considered the Queen of England a usurper and a heretic: her enemies looked to the Queen of Scots as the bulwark of the true faith in England; and Mary, impatient under her long captivity, naturally and justifiably felt disposed to encourage every scheme which promised her liberty and rest. At this moment, when all was so gloomy, the faction in Scotland by whose assistance Elizabeth had hitherto kept her opponents in check, had been suddenly overwhelmed, its leaders executed, or driven into banishment, and a government set up, the first acts of which had exhibited a complete devotedness to the friends and the interests of Mary.

The English queen was therefore compelled, by the imminency of the danger, to put the question, How was this crisis to be met? Having consulted Davison, she found that any attempt at direct mediation in the favour of the banished lords, would, in the present temper of the young king, be unsuccessful; and to use open force to create a counter-revolution, and restore the Protestant ascendancy, was a path full of peril.² Setting both these aside, however, there were still three ways which presented themselves to revive her influence, and check the headlong violence by which things

were running into confusion and hostility to England. One was to secure the services of Arran, who possessed the greatest influence over James. He had secretly offered himself to Elizabeth, declared his constancy in religion as it was professed in England, and his conviction, that to preserve the amity with that realm was the best policy for his sovereign. He undertook, if the English queen followed his counsel, to keep the young king his master unmarried for three years; and he requested her to send down to the Border some nobleman of rank in whom she placed confidence, whom he would meet there, and to whom, in a private conference, he would propose such measures as should be for the lasting benefit of both countries. A second method, directly contrary to this, was to support the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and Glammis, with money and troops; to employ them to overwhelm Arran, and to compel the king to restore the reformed faction, and the exiled ministers of the Kirk. A third scheme presented itself, in the offers which the captive queen herself had made at this moment to Elizabeth. She was now old, she said; ambition had no charms for her; she was too much broken in health and spirits, by her long imprisonment, to meddle with affairs of state. All that she now wished, was to be restored to liberty, and permitted to live in retirement, either in England or in her own country. She could not prevent her friends, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in Europe, from connecting her name with their efforts for the restoration of the true faith; from soliciting her approval, and organising plans for her deliverance. All this resulted from her having been so long detained a captive against the most common principles of law and justice; but if the queen would adopt a more generous system, and restore her to liberty, she was ready, she said, to make Elizabeth a party to the association, which was now nearly completed, with her son; to resign the government into the hands of the young king; to use her whole in-

¹ Carte, vol. iii. p. 586.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, June 23, 1584.

fluence in reconciling him to the exiled lords; to promote, by every method in her power, the amity with England; and not only to discourage the intrigues of the Roman Catholics against the government of her good sister, but to put her in possession of many secret particulars, known only to herself, by which she should be enabled to traverse the schemes of her enemies, and restore security to her person and government.

All these three methods presented themselves to Elizabeth, and all had their difficulties. If she accepted Arran's offer, it could hardly be done, except after the old fashion, which she so much disliked, of pensioning himself and his friends, outbidding France, and setting her face against his mortal enemies, the Douglases and the Hamiltons, whose return must be his ruin. If she sent back the exiled lords, it equally involved her in expense, and pledged her to the support of the Kirk; to whose Presbyterian form of government, and high claims of infallibility and independence, she bore no favour. If she embraced Mary's proposals,—her safest, because her justest and most generous course,—she acted in hostility to the advice of Burghley and Walsingham, who were deemed her wisest councillors; and who had declared, in the strongest possible terms, that the freedom of the Scottish queen was inconsistent with the life of their royal mistress, or the continuance of the Protestant opinions in England. Having weighed these difficulties, Elizabeth held a conference with her confidential ministers, Lord Burghley and Walsingham. Although of one mind as to the rejection of the offers of Mary, they, contrary to what had hitherto taken place, differed in opinion on the two alternatives which remained. Burghley advised her to gain Arran, to send a minister to hold a secret conference with him on the Borders,¹ and, through his influence, to manage the young king. Walsingham, on the other hand, warmly pleaded for the banished lords. No

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Lord Hunsdon, June 30, 1584.

trust, he affirmed, could be put in Arran; and as long as he ruled all, there would be no peace for England: but at this instant, so great was the unpopularity of the young king and this proud minister, that if her majesty sent home the banished lords, with some support in money and soldiers, they would soon expel him from his high ground, and restore English ascendancy at the Scottish court.

Having considered these opinions, Elizabeth decided that she would exclusively follow neither, but adopt a plan of her own. It was marked by that craft and dissimulation which, in those days of crooked and narrow policy, were mistaken for wisdom. To all the three parties who had offered themselves, hopes were held out, Arran was flattered, his proposals accepted; and Lord Hunsdon, the cousin of the English queen, directed to meet him in a conference on the Borders.² At the same moment, a negotiation, which had been opened a short while before with the Queen of Scots, was renewed: she was once more deluded with the dream of liberty, and encouraged to use her influence with her son, and persuade him to more charitable feelings towards England and the exiled lords;³ and, lastly, these noblemen, and the banished ministers of the Kirk, were fed with hopes that the queen would restore them to their country; strengthen them with money and arms, and gratefully accept their service to overwhelm both Arran and the Scottish queen.⁴ In this way Elizabeth persuaded herself that she could hold in her hand, and ingeniously play against each other, the main strings which moved the principal

² MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Lord Hunsdon, June 30, 1584.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 10, 1584, Walsingham to Davison. Ibid., Randolph to Davison, May 13, 1584. Ibid., Walsingham to Davison, May 20, 1584. Ibid., Papers of Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham, May 16, 1584; and ibid., Walsingham to Lord Shrewsbury, June 16, 1584; and ibid., Mary Queen of Scots to the French ambassador, July 7, 1584.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colville to Walsingham, May 25, 1584.

puppets of the drama. If Arran proved true to his promises, as Burghley anticipated, she could easily cast off the banished lords: if false, as Walsingham judged likely, they were ready at her beck, to rise and overwhelm him; whilst, from the captive queen, whose restoration to liberty was never seriously contemplated, she expected to gain such disclosures as should enable her to traverse the constant intrigues of her enemies. It is to be remembered that all these three modes of policy were carried on at one and the same time; and it is consequently difficult to bring the picture clearly, or without confusion, before the eye; but it must be attempted.

Elizabeth, in the beginning of July, informed James that she had accepted his offers, and had appointed Lord Hunsdon to hold a conference with Arran on the Borders.¹ The arrangements for this meeting, however, which was to be conducted with considerable pomp and solemnity, could not be completed till August; and Davison, the English ambassador in Scotland, employed this interval in getting up a faction in favour of the banished lords, in undermining the influence of Arran, and in tampering with the governor of the castle of Edinburgh, for its delivery into the hands of the queen. For all this Walsingham sent special instructions: and whilst his secret agents were busy in Scotland, Colvile had private meetings with Elizabeth, and laboured to gain the Hamiltons to join the exiled noblemen. It was hoped, in this way, that the foundation of a movement would be laid, by which, if Arran played false, a result which both Elizabeth and Walsingham expected, the banished nobles should break into Scotland, seize or assassinate the Scottish earl, get possession of the person of the king, and put an end to the French faction in that country. This, as will be seen in the sequel, actually took place, though the course of events interrupted and delayed the outbreak.²

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 2, 1584.

² Ibid., Colvile to Walsingham, May 25, 1584.

It was now time for the appointed conference; and on the 14th of August the Earl of Arran and Lord Hunsdon met at Foulden Kirk; a place on the Borders, not far from Berwick. It was one object of the Scottish lord to impress the English with a high idea of his power; and the state with which he came was that of a sovereign rather than a subject. His retinue amounted to five thousand horse, and he was attended by five members of the privy-council, who, whilst Hunsdon and he alone entered the church, waited obsequiously without in the churchyard. All, even the highest noblemen, appeared to treat him with such humility and deference, that Lord Hunsdon, writing to Burghley, observed, they seemed rather servants than fellow-councillors; and Sir Edward Hoby, who was also on the spot, declared he not only comported himself with a noble dignity and grace, but was, in truth, a king, binding and loosing at his pleasure.³ In opening the conference, Arran professed the utmost devotion to the service of the English queen; and with such eloquence and earnestness, that Hunsdon declared he could not question his sincerity. There was a frankness about his communications which impressed the English lord with a conviction of their truth; and Hoby, who knew Elizabeth's love of handsome men, sent a minute portrait of him to Burghley, recommending him to the favour of his royal mistress. "For the man," said he, "surely he carrieth a princely presence and gait, goodly of personage, representing a brave countenance of a captain of middle age, very resolute, very wise and learned, and one of the best spoken men that ever I heard: a man worthy the queen's favour, if it please her."⁴

But to return to the conference. Hunsdon, on his side, following the instructions of Elizabeth, complained

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584. Ibid., Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

of the recent unkind conduct of James in seeking an alliance with France, and encouraging the enemies of England. It was well known, he said, to his royal mistress, that this young prince, instead of fulfilling his promises to her to whom he owed so much, was practising against her. His harbouring of Jesuits; his banishment of the noblemen best affected to England; his intended "association" with his mother; his intercourse with the Pope; his contemptuous treatment of her ambassadors, all proved this; and would, ere now, have called down a severe retaliation, had he not recently shewn a change of mind, and expressed a desire of reconciliation, which she was willing to believe sincere. She now trusted that Arran would act up to his protestations; and employ his influence with the king his master, for the restoration of amity between the two crowns, and the return of the exiled nobility.

In his reply to this, Arran did not affect to conceal the intrigues of France and Spain to gain the young king; but he assured Hunsdon that all his influence should be exerted to counteract their success and promote the amity with England. As to Elizabeth's complaints, some he admitted to be true, some he denied, others he exculpated. His master, he said, had never dealt with any Jesuits, and knew of none in his dominions: the Scottish king had no intentions of carrying forward "the association" with his mother; nor had he any secret intrigues with the Pope. Arran admitted James's severity to some of the English ambassadors; but had it not been for the reverence borne to their mistress, they would have been used with harder measure: for James had Mr Randolph's own hand to prove him a stirrer up of sedition; and it was Mr Bowes, her majesty's ambassador, who was the principal plotter of the seizure of the king's person at Ruthven, and the recent rebellious enterprise at Stirling. As for the banished lords, it was strange, indeed, to find her majesty an intercessor for men who had cast off their allegiance,

and taken arms against their natural prince; and whose proceedings had been so outrageous, that neither the king nor he himself could entertain the idea of their return for a moment. Angus, Mar, and their companions, had never ceased to plot against the government. Let Hunsdon look back to the course of the last two years. With what shameful ingratitude had Angus treated the king his master, in the business of the Earl of Morton, in the affair of the raid of Ruthven, when they seized and imprisoned him, (Arran,) and threatened the king they would send him his head in a dish, if he did not instantly banish Lennox! Hunsdon pleaded against this the king's own letter to Elizabeth, which shewed that he was pleased with the change. Arran smiled and said it was easy to extort such a letter from a prince they had in their hands. Hunsdon replied that James ought to have secretly sought advice from Bowes, the English ambassador. Bowes! retorted Arran: Bowes, as the king well knew, was at the bottom of the whole conspiracy for his apprehension. And, then, look to the dealings of the same lords in the last affair, which cost Gowrie his head. With what craft did they seduce the ministers; plotting my death, and the king's second apprehension, had it not been happily detected and defeated. Nay, said he, getting warmer as he proceeded, what will your lordship think, if I tell you, that at this moment the men you are pleading for as penitent exiles, are as active and cruel-minded in their captivity as ever; and that at this instant I have in my hands the certain proofs of a plot now going forward to seize the king, to assassinate myself, to procure by treachery the castle of Edinburgh, and to overturn the government?¹ 'Tis but a few days since all this has been discovered; and can your lordship advise your mistress to intercede for such traitors?

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Walsingham, August 14, 1574; and MS. notes of the same interview, endorsed by Burghley, August 13, 1584. Also ibid., Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584.

This was too powerful an appeal to be resisted ; and Hunsdon, changing the subject, spoke of the conspiracies against Elizabeth. Adverting to Throckmorton's recent treason, she declared that his mistress the queen well knew that, at this moment, there were practices carrying on in the heart of her kingdom for the disturbance of her government. She knew, also, that the King of Scots and his mother were privy to these ; nay, she knew that it was intended he should be a principal actor therein. Let him disclose them all fully and frankly, and he should find that the English queen knew how to be grateful. To this, Arran promptly answered, that nothing should be hid from Elizabeth, and no effort omitted by the king or himself to satisfy her majesty on this point. He then shewed Hunsdon his commission under the great seal, giving him the broadest and most unlimited powers ; and the conference, which had lasted for five hours, was brought to an end.¹ On coming out of the church, both Hunsdon and he appeared in the highest spirits and good humour. It was evident to the lords, who had waited without, that their solitary communications had been of an agreeable nature ; and the Scottish earl seemed resolved that his own people should remark it ; for, turning to the lords about him, he said aloud, “ Is it not strange to see two men, accounted so violent and furious as we two are, agree so well together,—I hope, to the contentment of both crowns and their peace ? ”² At this moment Hunsdon and Arran were reckoned the proudest and most passionate noblemen in their two countries ; but for this excessive cordiality there were secret reasons, if we may believe an insinuation of Walsingham's to Davison. Hunsdon and Lord Burghley had a little plot of their own to secure the favour of the young King of Scots, by gaining Arran, and bringing about a marriage between

James and a niece of the English earl ; who, as cousin to Elizabeth, considered his kin as of royal blood.³ On this point Walsingham felt so bitterly that he accused his old friends of worshipping the rising sun ; and observed that her majesty had need now to make much of faithful servants.⁴

On coming out of the church, Arran called for the Master of Gray, a young nobleman of his suite, and introduced him to Hunsdon. It was impossible not to be struck with the handsome countenance and graceful manners of this youth. He had spent some time at the court of France ; and, having been bred up in the Roman Catholic faith, had been courted by the house of Guise, and employed by them as a confidential envoy in their negotiations with the captive Queen of Scots. He had always professed the deepest attachment to this unhappy princess ; and the young king had, within the last year, become so captivated with his society, that Mary, who had too rapidly trusted him with much of her secret correspondence, sanguinely hoped that his influence would be of the highest service to her, in regaining a hold over the affections of her son. But Gray, under an exterior which was pre-eminently beautiful, though too feminine to please some tastes, carried a heart as black and treacherous as any in this profligate age ; and, instead of advocating, was prepared to betray the cause of the imprisoned queen. To her son the young king, and the Earl of Arran, he had already revealed all he knew, and he now presented a letter from James his master to Hunsdon. Its contents were of a secret and confidential kind, and related to the conspiracies against Elizabeth, which gave this princess such perpetual disquiet. After enjoining on Hunsdon the strictest concealment of all he was about to communicate from every living being,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Walsingham, August 14, 1584 ; ibid., same date, Hunsdon to Burghley.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Dr Parry, August 15, 1584.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, October 1, 1584. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, July 27, 1584.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584.

except his royal mistress, Gray informed him that the King of Scots meant to send him speedily as ambassador to England, with some public and open message to Elizabeth; under colour of which, he was to be intrusted with the commission of disclosing all the secret practices of Mary. Had Hunsdon kept his promise, we should have known nothing of all this; but next morning he communicated it to Burghley, in a letter meant only for his private eye. It is to the preservation of this letter that we owe our knowledge of a transaction which brings the young king, and his favourite the Master of Gray, before us in the degrading light of informers: the one betraying his mother; the other selling, for his own gain, the secrets with which he had been intrusted by his sovereign. This is so dark an accusation that I must substantiate it by an extract from the letter in question. "Now, my lord," said Hunsdon, addressing Burghley, "for the principal point of such conspiracies as are in hand against her majesty, I am only to make her majesty acquainted withal by what means she shall know it—yet will I acquaint your lordship with all. The king did send the Master of Gray, at this meeting, to me, with a letter of commendation, under the king's own hand, whom he means presently to send to her majesty, as though it were for some other matters: but it is he that must discover all these practices, as one better acquainted with them than either the king or the earl, (but by him.¹) He is very young, but wise and secret, as Arran doth assure me. He is, no doubt, very inward with the Scottish queen, and all her affairs, both in England and France; yea, and with the Pope, for he is accounted a Papist; but for his religion, your lordship will judge when you see him; but her majesty must use him as Arran will prescribe unto her; and so shall she reap profit by him. . . . I have written to Mr Secretary [Walsingham] for a safe-conduct to him; but nothing

of the cause of his coming, but only to her majesty and to your lordship. If Mr Secretary be slow for this safe-conduct, I pray your lordship further it, for the matter requires no delay."²

The conference was now concluded, and Arran had succeeded in persuading Lord Hunsdon, not only of his sincerity and devotion to the service of Elizabeth, but of his entire hold over the mind of his royal master. If Lord Burghley, to whom he professed the utmost attachment, would co-operate firmly with himself and Hunsdon, and the Master of Gray, he was able, he affirmed, to hold the young king entirely at the devotion of the Queen of England. He did not despair to unite the two crowns in an indissoluble league; and, by exposing the practices of her enemies, to enable Elizabeth to traverse all the plots of Mary and the Roman Catholics. But there were two parties whom, he declared, they must put down at all risks: the one laboured for the liberty of the captive queen, and her association in the government with her son: the other was, at this moment, intriguing in every way for the return of Angus and the exiled lords; for the triumph of the Kirk over Episcopacy, and the re-establishment of the Republican principles which had led to the raid of Ruthven, and the other conspiracies for seizing the king, and using him as their tool. The first party was supported by France, Spain, and the Spanish faction of the Roman Catholics in England: its agents on the continent were the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow, whose emissaries, the Jesuits and seminary priests, were at that moment plotting in Scotland; it possessed many friends in the privy-council and nobility of Scotland,—such as Maitland the chancellor, Sir James and Sir Robert Melvil,³ the Earl of Huntly, and it might, indeed, be said, the whole body of the Roman Catholic peers in both countries. It was from

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584.

³ Ibid., Walsingham to Hunsdon, August 12, 1584.

¹ These words seem superfluous, yet they are in the original letter.

this party that the late conspiracies against the Queen of England had proceeded, as her majesty would soon discover by the embassy of the Master of Gray; and if she listened to his (Arran's) advice, it would be no difficult matter to detach James for ever from his mother and her friends. But to effect this, she must put down the other faction of the banished lords. The king, he said, hated Angus, their leader; and Angus and the whole house of Douglas were still boiling in their hearts to revenge on their sovereign, and on Arran, the death of the Regent Morton. As to the banished lords of the house of Hamilton, their return must be his (Arran's) destruction; and for the exiled ministers of the Kirk, James was so incensed against them, and so bent upon the establishment of Episcopacy, that he would listen to no measures connected with their restoration. Yet this party for the return of the banished lords was supported by Walsingham in England, and Davison her majesty's ambassador in Scotland; and their busy agent, Colvile, was admitted to secret audiences with Elizabeth, and fed with hopes of their return. If this policy were continued, (so argued Arran,) it would blast all his efforts for the binding his young master to the service of Elizabeth; for rather than one of the banished lords should set his foot in Scotland, James, he was assured, would throw himself into the arms of France and Spain, and carry through the project of an association with his mother the captive queen.

These arguments of Arran explain that jealousy and irritation which appeared in many of Secretary Walsingham's letters regarding the conference between him and Hunsdon. This crafty statesman was well aware that there was a conference within a conference, to which he was kept a stranger; a secret negotiation between Burghley and Hunsdon, the exact object of which he could not fathom; but by which he felt his own policy regarding Scotland shackled and defeated. He looked, therefore, with suspicion upon Burghley's whole con-

duct in the affairs of Scotland at this time; and these feelings were increased by the court which Arran had paid to Burghley's nephew, Sir Edward Hoby, who formed one of Hunsdon's suite at the conference.

This accomplished person, on the conclusion of the conference, rode from Foulden Kirk, with the Earl of Arran, to ground where he had left his troops; the distance was three miles; they had ample time for secret talk; and Hoby next morning described the conversation, in letters addressed both to his uncle Burghley, and his kinsman Dr Parry.¹ The Scottish earl was particularly flattering and confidential. Bringing Hoby near his troops, which were admirably mounted and accoutred, he pointed to them significantly, and shaking his head, told him, in these ranks there were many principal leaders, who would gladly send him out of the world if they could, so mortally did they hate him; but he feared them not. Nay, such was his power, and his enemies' weakness at this moment, that if Elizabeth would accept his offers, she should have twenty thousand men at her service. To devote himself to her, indeed, would be his highest pride. As for France and Spain he cared little for either: he neither needed their friendship, nor feared their enmity; but with the favour of his royal master, could live in Scotland independent of both; and for these conspiracies against his life, the same God who had defended him in Muscovy, Sweden, and Germany, would cast His shield over him at home. Arran then appears to have changed the subject to James's expectations as Elizabeth's successor, the state of England, the rival interests of the Catholic and Protestant factions in reference to this delicate point, and the probable effects of Mary's intrigues for the recovery of her liberty upon the prospects of her son. So, at least, may be conjectured, from Hoby's description of the great and weighty discourses into which he entered; and

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Dr Parry, August 15, 1584.

he ended by assuring him that the King of Scots desired, of all things in the world, to place himself, and his whole interests, in the hands of Lord Burghley and Lord Hunsdon, the one as the wisest head, and the other the boldest heart, in England.¹ When it is recollected that Arran was no friend of the Queen of Scots, and that Burghley was not only opposed to every scheme for her liberty, but had often repeated his conviction, that her life was inconsistent with Elizabeth's security, we require no more certain evidence of the melancholy fact, that James was ready, at this instant, to desert her cause, and betray her designs to her bitterest enemies.

On his return from this conference to the capital, Arran, presuming on its successful issue, resumed the management of affairs with a high and proud hand. A few days before he met Hunsdon, he had, as we have just seen, discovered a conspiracy against the government. In this plot, the captain of the castle of Edinburgh had been detected tampering with Davison and Walsingham, for the delivery of the fortress into the hands of the English faction; and Arran wisely resolved to defeat all recurrence of such attempts, by taking possession of the place in person.² He accordingly removed the governor and officers, substituted his own creatures in their room, demanded the keys of the crown jewels and wardrobe from Sir Robert Melvil, and, with his lady and household, occupied the royal apartments within the castle.³ He had now four of the strongest fortresses of the country at his devotion—Dumbarton, Stirling, Blackness, and Edinburgh; and his ambition enlarging by what it fed on, he assumed a kingly consequence and state which offended the ancient nobility, and excited their fear and envy. On his return from the conference at Foulden

Kirk, he was welcomed with cannon by the castle; a ceremony, as it was remarked, never used but in time of parliament, and to the king or regents; and when, soon after, summonses were issued for the meeting of the three estates, all the country looked forward with alarm to a renewal of the proscriptions and plunder which had already commenced against the exiled lords. But the reality even outran their anticipation. Arran, assisted by his lady, a woman whose pride and insolence exceeded his own, domineered over the deliberations of parliament; and, to the scandal of all, insisted on those acts, which they had previously prepared, being passed at once without reasoning.⁴ Sixty persons were forfeited,⁵ many were driven to purchase pardons at a high ransom, and the unhappy Countess of Gowrie was treated with a cruelty and brutality which excited the utmost commiseration in all who witnessed it. This lady, a daughter of Henry Stewart, lord Methven, on the last day of the parliament, had obtained admission to an antechamber, where, as the king passed, she hoped to have an opportunity of pleading for herself and her children; but, by Arran's orders, she was driven into the open street. Here she patiently awaited the king's return, and cast herself, in an agony of tears, at his feet, attempting to clasp his knees; but Arran, who walked at James's hand, hastily pulled him past, and pushing the miserable suppliant aside, not only threw her down, but brutally trode upon her as the cavalcade moved forward, leaving her in a faint on the pavement. Can we wonder that the sons of this injured woman, bred up in the recollection of wrongs like these, should, in later years, have cherished in their hearts the deepest appetite for revenge?

Immediately after the parliament, the king repaired to his palace at Falkland; whilst Arran, Montrose, and the other lords of his party, now all-powerful, remained in Edinburgh, engaged

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

² Ibid., Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584; and ibid., same to same, August 13, 1584.

³ MS., State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 16, 1584.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 24, 1584.

⁵ Ibid. August 16, 1584.

in pressing on the execution of the late acts, for the confiscation and ruin of their opponents. Of these, by far the most formidable was the Earl of Angus; who, although banished, and now at Newcastle, retained a great influence in Scotland. He was the head of the Presbyterian faction in that country, the great support of the exiled ministers; and it was his authority with Walsingham that traversed Arran's and James's schemes for a league between England and Scotland, on the broad basis of the establishment of Episcopacy. It was resolved, therefore, to cut off this baron; and Arran, and his colleague Montrose, the head of the powerful house of Graham, made no scruple of looking out for some desperate retainer, or hired villain, to whom they might commit the task. Nor, in these dark times, was such a search likely to prove either long or difficult. They accordingly soon pitched upon Jock, or John Graham of Peartree, whom Montrose knew to have a blood feud with Angus; sent a little page called Mouse to bring the Borderer to Edinburgh; feasted and caressed him during the time of the parliament, and carried him afterwards to Falkland, where the two earls and the king proposed to him not only to assassinate their hated enemy, but to make away with Mar and Cambuskenneth, his brother-exiles, at the same time. Jock at once agreed to murder Angus, and was promised a high reward by the young monarch; but he declined having anything to do with Mar or Cambuskenneth, with whom he had no quarrel; and he left the palace, after receiving from Montrose a short matchlock, or riding-piece, which was deemed serviceable for the purpose in hand. But this atrocious design was not destined to succeed. The villain, who was probably lurking about in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, was detected and seized, carried before Lord Scrope, compelled to confess his intention; and information of the whole plot was immediately transmitted by Scrope to Walsingham.¹ The English secre-

tary recommended that the discovery should be kept a secret from all except Angus and Mar, who were privately warned of the practices against them; and it is from the confession of the Borderer himself, which he made before Scrope, that these particulars are given. The intended assassin thus described his interview with the king:—After stating that he had arrived late at night at the palace, they brought him, he said, into the king's gallery, where he (the king) was alone by himself: and only he, Montrose, and Arran, and this examinant, being together, the king himself did move him, as the other two had done, for the killing of Angus, Mar, and Cambuskenneth: to whom he answered, that, for Mar and Cambuskenneth, he would not meddle with them; but for Angus, he would well be contented to do that, so as the king would well reward him for that. And the king said he would presently give him sixty French crowns, and twenty Scottish pound land to him and his for ever, lying in Strathern, near Montrose.²

These facts are so distinctly and minutely recorded in the manuscript history of Calderwood, who has given the whole^{*} of Graham's declaration, that it was impossible to omit them; but although there is little doubt of the truth of the intended murder, so far as Arran and Montrose are concerned, it would be, perhaps, unfair to believe in the full implication of the young king, on the single evidence of this Border-assassin. To return, however, from this digression, to Arran's headlong career. His hand, which had recently fallen so heavily on the nobility, was now lifted against the Kirk. Proclamation was made that all ministers should give up the rental of

ember 22, 1584, Scrope to Walsingham.—“For the matter of Peartree, I have kept the same secret, saving to the Earls of Angus and Mar, who, I trust, will use it as the same behoveth”

² MS., Calderwood, British Museum, 1468, Examination of Jock Graham of Peartree, taken before the Lord Scrope, Warden of the West Marches, at Carlisle, November 25. 1584.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., De-

their benefices, and that none should receive stipend but such as had subscribed the new-framed policy, by which Presbytery was abrogated and Episcopacy established. As was to be expected, many of the clergy resisted, and were commanded to quit the country within twenty days; nor were they permitted, as before, to take refuge with their banished brethren in England or Ireland.¹ All this was carried through at the instigation of the primate, Archbishop Adamson, who had recently returned from England, and exerted himself to purify the universities from the leaven of Presbyterian doctrine, and to fill the vacant pulpits with ministers attached to the new form of policy. His efforts, however, met with bitter opposition. At St Andrews, the archiepiscopal palace in which Adamson resided was surrounded by troops of students, who armed themselves with harquebusses, and paraded round the walls, bidding the primate remember how fatal that see had been to his predecessor, and look for no better issue. Montgomery, the Bishop of Glasgow, was attacked in the streets of Ayr by a mob of women and boys, who with difficulty were restrained from stoning him, and kept pouring out the vilest abuse, calling him atheist dog, schismatic excommunicate beast, unworthy to breathe or bear life.² Some of the ministers also, refusing to imitate the example of their brethren who had fled from their flocks, remained to brave the resentment of the court; and, taking their lives in their hands, openly preached against the late acts, and declared their resolution not to obey them. The anathema of one of these, named Mr John Hewison, minister of Cambuslang, has been preserved. It is more remarkable, certainly, for its courage than its charity, and may be taken as an example of the tone of the high Puritan faction to which he belonged. Preaching in the Blackfriars at Edinburgh, on the text which declares the resolute answer of St Peter

and St Paul to the council of the Pharisees, he passed from the general application to the trials of the Kirk at that moment, and broke out into these words:—"But what shall we say? There is injunction now given by ane³ wicked and godless council, to stop the mouths of the ministers from teaching of the truth; and sic⁴ a godless order made, as the like was never seen before. These is ane heid⁵ of the Kirk made; there being nae⁶ heid but Jesus Christ, nor cannot be. Stinking and baggage heidis!⁷ an excommunicated sanger!⁸ an excommunicate willane,⁹ wha sall never be obeyed here! We will acknowledge nae prince, nae magistrate, in teaching of the Word; nor be bounden to nae injunctions, nor obey nae acts of parliament, nor nae other thing that is repugnant to the Word of God: but will do as Peter and John said, Better obey God nor man. But it is not the king that does this. It is the wicked, godless, and villane council he has, and other godless persons, that inform his majesty wrangously,¹⁰ whereof there is aneugh¹¹ about him. For my own part," he continued, warming in his subject with the thoughts of persecution, "I ken¹² I will be noted. I regard not. What can the king get of me but my head and my blood? I sall never obey their injunctions; like as I request all faithful folk to do the like."¹³ The prediction of this bold minister was so far verified, that he was apprehended, and order given to bring him to justice; but, for some reason not easily discovered, the trial did not take place.¹⁴

It was at this same time that Mr David Lindsay, one of the persecuted ministers, whose mind, in the solitude of his prison at Blackness, had been worked into a state of feverish enthusiasm, was reported to have seen ar-

³ Ane, one. ⁴ Sic, such. ⁵ Heid, head.

⁶ Nae, no. ⁷ Heidis, heads.

⁸ Sanger, singer. ⁹ Willane, villain.

¹⁰ Wrangously, wrongfully.

¹¹ Aneugh, enough. ¹² Ken, Know.

¹³ MS., State-paper Office, original, Accusation of Mr John Hewison.

¹⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, July 14, 1584.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 16, 1584.

² Ibid.

extraordinary vision. Suddenly, in the firmament, there appeared a figure in the likeness of a man; of glorious shape and surpassing brightness; the sun was above his head, the moon beneath his feet; and he seemed to stand in the midst of the stars. As the captive gazed, an angel alighted at the feet of this transcendent being, bearing in his right hand a red naked sword, and in his left a scroll, to whom the glorious shape seemed to give commandment; upon which the avenging angel, for so he now appeared to be, flew rapidly through the heavens, and lighted on the ramparts of a fortress, which Lindsay recognised as the castle of Edinburgh. Before its gate stood the Earl of Arran and his flagitious consort, the earl gazing in horror on the destroying minister, who waved his sword above his head, his countess smiling in derision, and mocking his fears. The scene then changed: the captive was carried to an eminence, from which he looked down upon the land, with its wide fields, its cities and palaces. Suddenly the same terrible visitant appeared: a cry of lamentation arose from its inhabitants; fire fell from heaven on its devoted towns, the sword did its work, the rivers ran with blood, and the fields were covered with the dead. It was a fearful sight; but, amidst its horrors, a little bell was heard; and within a church which had stood uninjured, even in the flames, a remnant of the faithful assembled, to whom the angel uttered these words of awful admonition:—“Metuant Justi. Iniquitatem fugite. Delicite Justitiam et Judicium; aut cito revertar et posteriora erunt pejora prioribus.”¹ Lindsay asserted that it was impossible for him to ascertain whether this scene, which seemed to shadow out the persecutions and prospects of the Kirk, was a dream or a vision; but it brought to his mind, he said, a prophecy of Knox, who, not long before his death, had predicted great peril to the faithful in the

eighteenth year of the reign of James.

Elizabeth now recalled Davison from Scotland,² and looked anxiously for James's promised ambassador, the Master of Gray, whose mission had, as she thought, been somewhat suspiciously delayed. But this gave her the less anxiety, as she had in the meantime continued her correspondence with the banished lords, whom, at any moment, she was ready to let loose against Arran and the king.³ She, at the same time, resumed her negotiations with Mary; and this unfortunate princess, who had so often been deluded with hopes, which withered in the expected moment of accomplishment, was, at last, induced to believe that the blessed period of freedom had arrived. Even Walsingham declared himself pleased with her offers, and advised his royal mistress to be satisfied with them.⁴ Such was the crisis seized by the accomplished villainy of the Master of Gray, to betray his royal mistress, and to enter the service of Elizabeth. Before he threw off the mask, he had the effrontery to write to Mary, affecting the highest indignation at the suspicions she had expressed of his fidelity; and declaring that the best mode to serve her interests was that which he was now following. It was necessary, he said, that the young king, her son, should, in the first instance, treat solely for himself with Elizabeth, and abandon all thoughts of “the association” with his mother. This, he affirmed, would disarm suspicion; and James, having gained the confidence of the English queen, might be able to negotiate for her liberty. But Mary, who was already aware of Gray's treachery, from the representations of Fontenay, the French ambassador, promptly and indignantly answered, that any one who proposed such a separation between her interests and those of her son, or who op-

¹ Sir George Warrender, MS., vol. B. fol. 59. “A vision [which] appeared to Mr David Lindsay, he being in his bed in the house of Blackness, in the month of October 1584.”

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, September 17, 1584.

³ Ibid., Walsingham to Captain Reid, September 23, 1584.

⁴ Sadler Papers by Scott, vol. ii.

posed, "the association," which was almost concluded, must be her enemy, and in that light she would regard him. To this Gray returned an angry answer, and instantly set off for England.¹

At Berwick he had a private consultation with Hunsdon, whose heart he gained by his sanctimonious deportment in the English Church, and by the frankness with which he communicated his instructions. His principal object, he declared, was to insist that the banished lords should either be delivered up by Elizabeth, or dismissed from her dominions. If this were done, or if the queen were ready to pledge her word that it should be done, he was prepared, he said, to disclose all he knew of the secret plots against her person and government; and he would pledge himself that no practice had been undertaken, for the last five years, against herself, or her estate, by France, Spain, the Scottish queen, or the Pope, but she should know it, and how to avoid it.² Gray had been expressly ordered by James to hold his confidential communications with Burghley alone, and to repose no trust in Walsingham, whom the young king regarded as his enemy. From Arran he had received the same injunctions; and nothing could exceed the confidence which both monarch and minister seemed disposed to place in Cecil. The king paid court to him in a long pedantic letter, written wholly in his own hand; in which he discoursed learnedly upon Alexander the Great and Homer; modestly disclaiming any parallel between himself and the conqueror of Darius, but exalting Cecil far above such "a blind, begging fellow" as the Grecian bard. He addressed him as his friend and cousin, and assured him that he considered himself infinitely fortunate in being permitted to confide his most secret affairs to such a counsellor; to whom, he was convinced, he already owed all the prosperity which hitherto had at-

tended him.³ Arran, at the same time, wrote in the most flattering and confidential terms to Sir Edward Hoby, Burghley's nephew; and Hunsdon was requested by James to repair from Berwick to the English court, that he might assist in their consultations.⁴

Gray now proceeded to London, and was speedily admitted to an audience of Elizabeth. It may be necessary, for a moment, to attend to the exact attitude and circumstances in which this princess now stood. She had the party of the banished lords, now in England, at her command. Angus, Mar, Lord Arbroath the head of the house of Hamilton, Glammis, and many other powerful barons, were in constant communication with Walsingham; their vassals on the alert; the exiled ministers of the Kirk eager to join and march along with them: they held themselves ready at her beck; and she had only to give the signal for them to cross the Border and attack Arran, to have it instantly obeyed. On the side of Mary, this poor captive had been drawn on, by the prospect of freedom, to offer the sacrifice of everything which belonged to her as an independent princess, and which she could give up with honour. By the long-contemplated "association" with her son, she had agreed to resign the government into his hands, and to renounce for ever all connexion with public affairs, were she only allowed to live in freedom, with the exercise of her religion. Here, then, the Queen of England had only to consent, and in the opinion of even the suspicious Walsingham, she was safe.

Such was the state of things when the Master of Gray made his proposals from a third party,—the young king and Arran. From his intimate knowledge of the most secret transactions of the Scottish queen and the Catholic faction, he was possessed, as he affirmed, of information which vitally touched her majesty's person and estate.⁵ This he was ready to reveal,

¹ Papers of Master of Gray, Bannatyne Club, pp. 30-37.

² Hunsdon to Burghley, October 19, 1584, Papers of Master of Gray, p. 13.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, James to Burghley, October 14, 1584. ⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Papers of the Master of Gray, p. 13, Hunsdon to Burghley, October 19, 1584.

but on condition that she would deliver up the banished lords, or drive them out of her dominions, break off all treaty with Mary on the subject of the association, and advance a large sum of money, in the shape of an annual proof of her affection to the young king. The first was absolutely necessary; for the king his master was animated with the strongest hatred of his rebels. The second was equally so; for Mary's liberty was inconsistent with the security of both the Queen of England and James; her unshaken attachment to the Roman Catholic faith rendering any "association" with her son highly dangerous to Elizabeth; whose efforts ought to be directed to separate their interests, and to secure the establishment of a government in Scotland under a minister opposed to Mary. And here Gray artfully laid the foundation of his own rise with Elizabeth, and of Arran's disgrace. Arran, he insinuated, was not so deeply devoted to her majesty, or so hostile to the Scottish queen, as he pretended. He was proud, capricious, tyrannical, and completely venal. The king, too, was in such need of money, that Elizabeth would do well to remember that his politics, at this time, depended on the supply of his purse. If France bid highest, France would have both the minister and his master. Arran, too, by his pride and extortions, was daily, almost hourly, raising up a formidable party against himself. None, he said, dared to aspire to any interest with the king, whom he did not attack and attempt to ruin. Already he, the Master of Gray, was the object of his jealousy and hatred, for the favour with which the king regarded him. All was yet, indeed, smooth and smiling between them; but he knew well, this very embassy had been given him with the view of separating him from his master. The storm was brewing; but if Arran tried to wreck him, as he had done so many others, he might chance, proud as he was, to have a fall himself. So confident did he feel, he said, in the love of his royal master, that if Elizabeth would grant him her

support, he was certain he could supplant this insolent favourite, gain the young king, unite England and Scotland in an indissoluble league, recall the banished lords, overwhelm all the secret plots of the Roman Catholics, and completely separate Mary and her son. To effect all this, however, would require time; for, on two points, the king would be hard to be moved. If the exiles came back, they would bring Andrew Melvil and the banished ministers of the Kirk along with them; and, at this moment, the very mention of such a result would excite James's determined opposition.

Elizabeth was highly pleased with this proposal. She had long distrusted Arran, and felt that her best security lay in the return of the Protestant lords: she was anxious to break off her negotiation with Mary, but did not like the odium of such a course; the blame would be thrown on the King of Scots by Gray's plan, and this she liked much. She knew the unremitting efforts of France and Spain to gain the young king; and felt assured that her only safeguard would be an "association" between her own kingdom and Scotland, from which Mary should be entirely excluded; and the basis of which should be the defence of the Reformed religion against the perpetual attacks of the Roman Catholics in Europe.

There were some circumstances of recent occurrence which greatly strengthened her in this course. Father Crichton, a Jesuit, happening to be on his voyage to Scotland from Flanders, the vessel was chased by pirates, and he was observed to tear some papers and cast them away; but the wind blew them back into the ship: they were picked up, put together, and found to contain a proposal for an invasion of England by Spain and the Duke of Guise. As one object proposed here, and in all such plots, was the delivery of the Queen of Scots and the dethronement of Elizabeth, their constant recurrence was now met by an "association" for the protection of the English queen's government and life, first proposed by

Leicester, and eagerly subscribed by persons of all ranks and denominations. The terms of this association were afterwards solemnly approved by parliament, and an act passed for the safety of the queen's person. It stated that, if any invasion or rebellion should be made in her dominions, or any enterprise attempted against her person, by *or for* any person pretending a title to the crown after her death, she might, by a commission under the great seal, constitute a court for the trial of such offences, and which should have authority to pass sentence upon them. It added that, a judgment of "guilty" having been pronounced, it should immediately be made public; and that all persons against whom such sentence was passed, should be excluded from all claim to the crown, and be liable to be prosecuted to the death, with their aiders and abettors, by her majesty's subjects.¹ This league was evidently most unjust towards the Scottish queen, as it made her responsible, and liable to punishment, for the actions of persons over whom she had no control. She saw this; and at once declared that "the association" had no other object than indirectly to compass her ruin. But if alarming to Mary, it was proportionably gratifying to Elizabeth. She persuaded herself that, if her subjects thus united to protect her person, and preserve the Reformed faith, she ought vigorously to second their efforts; and this inclined her to look graciously on Gray. The measures, therefore, proposed by him were adopted. It was resolved to undermine Arran, as the first step for the restoration of the banished lords; and the other objects, it was trusted, would follow. To co-operate with Gray, Sir Edward Wotton was chosen to succeed Davison as ambassador in Scotland. He was a man of brilliant wit and insinuating address, a great sportsman, an adept in hunting and "woodcraft;" and these qualities, with a present of eight couple of the best hounds, and some choice horses, would, it was believed, entirely

¹ Carte, vol. iii. p. 587.

gain the heart of the young king. Wotton, too, as we learn from Sir James Melvil, was a deep plotter, and capable of the darkest designs, whilst to the world he seemed but an elegant, light-hearted, and thoughtless man of fashion.

Having laid these schemes for the ruin of his captive sovereign and of Arran his friend, the Master of Gray returned to the Scottish court, and received the thanks of the king, and his still all-powerful favourite, for the success with which he had conducted his negotiations.² To disarm suspicion, it was judged prudent that, for some time, all should go on serenely. Elizabeth wrote in flattering terms to Arran. She, at the same time, commanded the banished lords to remove from Newcastle into the interior;³ and, in return for this, Gray had the satisfaction of assuring her that he found the king his master in so loving a disposition towards her, that he could not feel more warmly were he her natural son. He was equally successful in at once creating a breach between Mary and James. The just and merited contempt with which Fontenay the French ambassador had stigmatised Gray's base desertion of that princess, furnished him with a subject of complaint to the king and council; and he so artfully represented the dangerous consequences which must follow "an association" between the young king and his mother, that it was unanimously resolved it should never take place.⁴

This was a great point gained; and, to secure further success, he implored Elizabeth and her ministers to humour James for the present, by entirely casting off Angus and the exiled lords, whose despair was great when they found the predicament in which they stood. They appealed in urgent terms

² MS. Letter, Master of Gray to Elizabeth, January 24, 1584-5. Ibid., Colvile to Walsingham, December 31, 1584. Also Papers of Master of Gray, p. 41, Master of Gray to Walsingham, January 24, 1584-5.

³ MS., State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, December 31, 1584.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Master of Gray, under the title of *Le Lievreau*, to Elizabeth.

to Walsingham; declared that even now, if the queen would say the word, they would break across the Border, surprise the person of the king, and chase Arran with ignominy from the country. Everything was ready for such an effort, and their friends only waited their arrival. But their proposal for an irruption was coldly received. Walsingham wrote to them, that her majesty, seeing the hard success of the late enterprise at Stirling, was doubtful some like plot might have like issue; and preferred a more temperate system of mediation, in Scottish affairs, to a more violent course.¹ The exiles, therefore, submitted; and James and Arran, exulting in their success, recommended their persecution of the Kirk.

All ministers were compelled, on penalty of deprivation, to subscribe the acts of parliament which established the Episcopal form of government; forbidden to hold the slightest intercourse with their brethren who had fled for conscience' sake; and even prosecuted, if they dared to pray for them.² This extreme severity appears to have been followed by a very general submission to the obnoxious acts; and as it was followed up by the removal of the banished lords into the interior of England, and a prohibition of any Scottish minister from preaching, publicly or privately, in that realm, the cause was considered at the lowest ebb. A letter, written at this time by David Hume, one of the exiles, from Berwick, to Mr James Carmichael, a recusant brother of the Kirk, gave some details which carried sorrow to the hearts of the brave little remnant which still stood out against the court. It told, in homely but expressive phrase, that all the ministers betwixt Stirling and Berwick, all Lothian, and all the Merse, had subscribed, with only ten exceptions; amongst whom, the most noted were Patrick Simpson and Robert Pont; that the Laird of Dun, the most venerable champion of the Kirk, had

so far receded from his primitive faith as to have become a pest to the ministry in the north; that John Durie, who had so long resisted, had "*cracked his curple*"³ at last, and closed his mouth; that John Craig, so long the coadjutor of Knox, and John Brande his colleague, had submitted; that the pulpits in Edinburgh were nearly silent,—so fearful had been the defection,—except, said he, a very few, who sigh and sob under the cross. His own estates, he added, had been forfeited, his wife and children beggared; and yet he might be grateful he was alive, though in exile, for at home terror occupied all hearts. No man, said he in conclusion, while he lieth down, is sure of his life till day.⁴

This miserable picture was increased in its horrors by the violent proceedings of Arran against all connected with the banished lords, by his open contempt of the laws, and the shameful venality of his government. His pride, his avarice, his insolence to the ancient nobility, and impatience of all who rivalled him in the king's affections, made his government intolerable; and the Master of Gray, beginning to find that he was looked upon with suspicion by this daring man, concluded that the moment had come for the mortal struggle between them.

At this time, Sir Edward Wotton, the English ambassador, arrived in Edinburgh. He was instructed to congratulate James on his wise determination to break off "the association" with his mother the captive queen, and to encourage him to enter into a firm league with England. The ambassador was also directed by Elizabeth to hold out to the Scottish king good hopes of a pension; but Walsingham, her prudent secretary, advised him not rashly to name the sum set down in his instructions, as its small sound might rather do harm than good.⁵ As

³ "Cracked his curple." Curple, Scots; i.e., crupper; meaning that the crupper had broken, and Durie, saddle and all, had come violently to the ground.

⁴ MS. Letter in Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1528.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, minute, Walsingham to Wotton, May 23, 1585.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Colvile, January 10, 1584-5.

² Spottiswood, p. 336.

he found opportunity, he was to sound the king, also, on the subject of his marriage, naming the King of Denmark's daughter; and to assure him that his deep animosity against the banished lords was, in her opinion, immoderate and unjust. Last summer, she said, the Earl of Arran had, in his letters to her, accused them of a conspiracy against his life; and now, recently, she had investigated a similar story brought up by James's ambassador, the justice-clerk: but both tales, in the end, proved so weak and groundless, that she had good cause to think them maliciously devised to serve some end.¹

Such were Wotton's open instructions; and as he seconded all he said by a present of eight couple of buck-hounds, and brought some noble horses for the royal stud, James received him with the youthful boisterous delight which such gifts usually produced in the royal mind. But the ambassador had a darker and more secret commission. During Gray's late stay at the court of England, he had contrived, with the approval of Elizabeth and the assistance of Walsingham, a plot for the destruction of Arran; and Bellenden, the justice-clerk, who had recently visited England, had been prevailed on by the queen to join it. Wotton was now sent down to take the management; and at the moment when he arrived, he found the Master of Gray deliberating with his brother-conspirators whether it were best to seize and *discourt*² their enemy, or to assassinate him. The Lord Maxwell, now best known by the title of Earl of Morton, had joined the plot, having a mortal feud with Arran; and it is not improbable the more violent course would have been chosen, when Gray received, by the hands of Wotton, a letter from Elizabeth, recommending them to spare him. Wotton next day wrote thus to Walsingham:—

"By my letter that myself did deliver to the Master of Gray from her

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Sir Edward Wotton, April 1585.

² To *discourt*; a phrase not unusual in the letters of this time; meaning to banish any minister from the king's presence and councils.

majesty, their purpose is altered, at her majesty's request, to deal with him by violence; notwithstanding, upon the least occasion that shall be offered, they mean to make short work with him."³ Gray, also, on the same day, addressed a letter to the English secretary, assuring him that he would comply with the queen's wishes, and not resort to violence, except he saw some hazard to his own life. Adding, emphatically and truly, as to his own character "When life is gone, all is gone to me."⁴

In the midst of these intrigues, all was bustle and pleasure at the Scottish court. The king hunted, feasted, and made progresses to his different palaces and the seats of his nobility. The ambassador, in whose society he took much delight, attended him on all his expeditions; occasionally mingling state affairs with the chase, or the masque, or the banquet; recommending the speedy adjustment of the league with Elizabeth; sounding him lightly on the point of his marriage; touching on the melancholy divisions amongst his nobility, which were increased by his continued severity to the banished lords; and sometimes adverting, with extreme caution, and in general terms, to the delicate subject of the promised pension. To the league with England, James shewed the strongest inclination. It appeared to him, he said, most wise and necessary that the "confederacy" which had recently been entered into by the various Roman Catholic princes, to prosecute the professors of the Reformed faith, should be met by a union of the Protestant powers in their own defence; and when the various heads of this treaty, transmitted by Walsingham to Wotton, were laid before him, they met with his cordial approbation.⁵

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, May 31, 1585

⁴ Ibid., Master of Gray to Walsingham, May 31, 1585.

⁵ Ibid., Wotton to Walsingham, June 5,

1585. Ibid., June 7, 1585, Heads of the League. Ibid., Walsingham to Wotton, June 27, 1585. Also ibid., Thomas Miller to Archibald Douglas, July 8, 1585.

On his marriage he shewed no disposition to speak with seriousness; and Gray assured Wotton that to deal lightly in that matter would be best policy, his young master having no inclination to match himself at this moment. His mind was wholly engrossed with his pastimes, hunting, and his buckhounds. Of this passion, a ludicrous outbreak occurred shortly before Wotton's arrival. James, at the end of a sharp and successful run, calling for a cup of wine, drank to all his dogs; and, in particular, selecting and taking the paw of an old hound, named Tell True, who had greatly distinguished himself, he thus apostrophised his favourite:—"Tell True, I drink to thee above all my hounds; and would sooner trust thy tongue than either Craig or the bishop." Craig was the royal chaplain, and the prelate, Montgomery bishop of Glasgow. This anecdote was reported again to the banished ministers of the Kirk; and mourned over more seriously, and as pointing to a deeper depravity, than it seems to have indicated.¹

Wotton was pleased to find that James continued constant in his resolution not to enter into any association with the captive queen; but, on the other hand, there were two subjects on which the young monarch was immovable,—his love for Arran, and his enmity to the banished Protestant lords and their ministers. These were most serious impediments in the way of the negotiation; and as the conspirators suspected that Arran was already intriguing with France, to traverse the league with England, many secret conversations took place between the English ambassador and the conspirators, as to the propriety of cutting off this powerful favourite at once, before he should do more mischief. Wotton duly and minutely communicated what passed at such interviews to Walsingham and Elizabeth; and although the letters are in many places written in cipher, and wherever the intended murder is di-

rectly mentioned, the words have been partially scored out, still, fortunately for the truth, we have a key to the cipher, and the erasure is often legible. Strange and revolting as it may sound to the ears of modern jurisconsults, it is nevertheless certain that the Lord Justice-clerk Bellenden, the late ambassador to England, and the second highest criminal judge in the country, promised Wotton to find an assassin of Arran, if he would engage that his royal mistress would protect him. Wotton was much puzzled with this, and still more embarrassed when he received a private visit from the proposed murderer himself, who figures in his letter as 38, and appears to have been Douglas provost of Lincluden.² The English ambassador had been carefully warned not to implicate Elizabeth by any promises, but to leave the matter to themselves; and as it is curious to observe how, in those times, an ambassador informed a secretary of state of an intended assassination, and probed his mind as to the encouragement which should be held out, it may be interesting to give some short passages of his letter to Walsingham. "The Tuesday, in the morning, 38 came likewise to me, that used, in effect, the same discourse that —— had done before, all tending to a necessity of ——; which, for the weal of the realms, should be done so that the doers of it have thanks for their labour. I propounded to him, whether he might not be better *discourted* by way of justice. 'Yea,' quoth he, 'worthily for twenty offences; but the king will not admit such proceedings.' Then I asked if 20 [Morton] might not attempt it, seeing he was already engaged; but that, for want of secrecy, he said, and distance, was full of danger. At last I perceived, by his speech, that himself was to do it. . . . The thing he requires, as he saith, is to have thanks for his labours, and for his good affection he bears to her majesty; and if he fortune to despatch it, that he be relieved with some money, to support

¹ Calderwood MS., British Museum, fol. 1528, David Hume to Mr James Carmichael, March 20, 1584-5.

² MS. Letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 109.

him in the estate of a gentleman, till he were able to recover the king's favour again; and this I trust, quoth he, 14 [the Earl of Leicester] and 15 [Mr Secretary] will not deny. In general speeches, I told him that your honours were personages that had him in special recommendation. . . . I told him I would make relation of this matter to your honours: and he said he would write himself to Mr Secretary; and so praying me, if I did write aught, to commit his name to cipher, we departed.¹ This is a very shocking picture; but the quiet way in which the intended murderer of Arran talked of his projected deed is, perhaps, less abhorrent than Wotton's own words to the justice-clerk, when this dignitary of the law pleaded the necessity of cutting him off, and offered to provide the man to do it. "I paused a while," so Wotton wrote to Walsingham, "and remembering that I had no commission to persuade them, or animate therein, further than they saw cause themselves, specially in things of this nature, I durst not promise aught to encourage them; and therefore told him that I wist not what to say to the matter. To move her majesty I would not; neither did I think it fit for her to hear of it beforehand: to abuse them I would not; only, for mine own part, I was commanded to increase their credit with the king so long as I abode here. . . . I wished rather, if it might be, to have him discourted. . . . In the end, to be quit of him, (for, to be plain with your honour, I found myself in a great strait and desire not to be acquainted with the matter, which, if it must be done, I wished rather to have been done ere I came hither,) I asked what opinion 38 [the provost] had hereof, and wished him to confer with him, which he said he would, and departed."² With 38's opinion, and offer, in his own person, to finish the business, we are already acquainted. But it is

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 195, Wotton to Walsingham, June 1, 1585. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 29, 1585.

² MS. Letter, British Museum, C. viii., June 1, 1585.

needless to get further involved in the meshes of this conspiracy, from which Arran escaped at this time, by his own vigilance and the coldness of the ambassador, who would fain have insured the profits of success, without the responsibility of failure.

In the meantime Wotton had completely succeeded in the principal and avowed object of his mission. James had determined that the proposed league between England and his kingdom, for the defence of religion, should be concluded. He had revised and amended the various articles; and, with the view of bringing forward the subject, had assembled a convention of his nobility at St Andrews, when an event occurred which threatened to throw all into confusion. This was the slaughter of Lord Russell in a Border affray, which took place at a meeting, or day of truce, as it was called, between Sir John Foster and Kerr of Fernyhirst, the wardens of the middle marches.³ There is good reason to believe that this unfortunate affair was wholly unpremeditated, for so Foster himself declared in his letter, written to Walsingham the day after;⁴ but as Fernyhirst happened to be the intimate friend of Arran, it instantly occurred to the crafty diplomacy of the English secretary, and Wotton the ambassador,⁵ that a good handle was given by the death of Russell to procure the disgrace of this hated minister. Foster, therefore, was directed to draw up a paper, the purport of which was to shew that the attack had been preconcerted;⁶ and Wotton did not scruple to declare to the young king that one of the bravest noblemen of England had been murdered by the contrivance of Arran and Fernyhirst.

James, who was cast down at this interruption of the league, and unpre-

³ July 28.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Foster to Walsingham, July 28.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 31, 1585, St Andrews.

⁶ MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Foster's Reasons to prove that the murder of Lord Russell was intended. This paper probably misled Camden, who gives an exaggerated account of the whole dispute. Kennet, vol. ii. p. 505.

pared for the violence of Wotton, could not conceal or command his feelings, but shed tears like a child, protested his own innocence, and wished all the lords of the Borders dead, provided Lord Russell were alive again. Nor were these mere words: Arran was imprisoned in the castle of St Andrews; Fernyhurst was threatened to be sent to stand his trial in England; and a strict investigation into the whole circumstances of the alleged murder took place. But the result rather evinced the innocence than established the guilt of Fernyhurst. Arran, meanwhile, bribed the Master of Gray, who procured his imprisonment at St Andrews to be exchanged for a nominal confinement to his own castle at Kinneil; and this scheme for the ruin of the court favourite bid fair, by its unexpected result, to re-establish his influence over the young king, and increase his power.¹

All this fell heavily on Wotton and Walsingham. Arran had resumed his intrigues with France; it was believed that he had adopted the interests of the imprisoned queen, who, as we shall immediately see, was now busily engaged in organising that great plot for the invasion of England and her own delivery from captivity, which was known by the name of Babington's Conspiracy. At the same moment Burghley and Walsingham, who, by intercepting Mary's letters, had discovered her designs against their royal mistress, were occupied in weaving those toils around Mary, and possessing themselves of those proofs of her guilt, by which they trusted to bring her to the scaffold. It was to them, therefore, of the utmost consequence that the league between England and Scotland should be concluded before they made their great effort against Mary; that the young king should be bound to Elizabeth by ties for mutual defence and the maintenance of the established religion; and that Arran,

and French interests and intrigues, should not repossess their power over his mind. Yet the only counterpoise to Arran in James's affections lay in the Master of Gray, their great tool and partisan; and he had betrayed them. There could not be a doubt that Arran owed to him his late deliverance from prison. Gray had proved false, too, at the critical moment when he was privy to all their schemes against this favourite; so that it became equally hazardous to trust him or to throw him off. What, then, was to be done? It was necessary to act rapidly—to act decidedly; and yet it was almost impossible for Elizabeth's ministers to make a single move against Arran without the fear of failure. From this difficulty they were delivered by the fertile brain and flagitious principles of the very man who had so recently betrayed them—the Master of Gray. He, too, had his misgivings as to the insecurity of the ground on which he stood, and in his dilemma sought the advice of Archibald Douglas, now in banishment in England, the intimate friend of Walsingham, and equally familiar with the party of the exiled lords and the expatriated ministers of the Kirk; who, since the fall of Morton, had found a retreat in England. To this man—who had been stained by the murder of Darnley, and since then engaged in innumerable plots, sometimes for, and sometimes against, the queen-mother—Gray addressed a singular letter, which yet remains, in which he laid open his secret heart and required his advice, as the friend he loved best in the world. He told him frankly that the Queen of England had deserted and almost ruined him. It was by her advice, and relying upon her promises of support, that he had matched himself against Arran; that he had sought Arran's life, and Arran his: and now that he was reduced to a strait, where were all her promises? To continue to deal frankly with her was impossible; and must lead to his overthrow. What parties, then, were left to be embraced?—Arran, the imprisoned queen, the

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 29 and 30, 1585; also *ibid.* same to same, Aug. 6 and 7, 1585, St Andrews; and *ibid.* Aug. 13, 1585, same to same; and *ibid.* Aug. 19, 1585, same to same; and *ibid.* Aug. 21, 1585, same to same.

French politics, the Roman Catholic interests in Europe? This was impossible. Arran, although obliged to him for his recent escape, was the falsest of men, and never to be long trusted; Arran knew, too, that he would have taken his life. As to the Scottish queen, he (Gray) could never hope to be trusted by Mary after deserting her; and his perfidy was perfectly known to the whole body of the Catholics. One party only remained, by uniting himself with which a revolution might be effected in Scotland: the party of the banished lords, and their expatriated friends, the ministers of the Kirk. If Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glammis, could make up their differences with their exiled brethren, Lords Claud and John Hamilton, with whom they were still at feud, and unite in invading Scotland, there would be little doubt of a strong diversion in their favour. To them Gray said he would promise all his influence; it might happen, too, that he would find means to rid them of Arran; but as to this he would make no stipulation. Yet, if the deed could still be done so secretly that his knowledge of the "doer" should not be suspected, he would still make the attempt. At all events, they should be joined by Bothwell and Lord Hume; and he could promise, also, he thought, for Cessford. He concluded his letter by assuring Douglas that this was the only plan left which had the slightest likelihood of success; that, if the exiled noblemen were ever to make the attempt, now was the time when he would promise them they should muster at least two to one against their enemies; and he ended his letter with these emphatic words, "Persuade yourself, if the banished lords come down, the king shall either yield or leave Scotland."¹

This new plot was readily embraced by the outlawed lords and the ministers of the Kirk, and warmly encouraged by Wotton, the English ambas-

sador, who immediately communicated it to Walsingham, in a letter from Dumbarton, whither he had accompanied the young king upon a hunting party. The Master of Gray had sought him out, he said, and informed him that he was now convinced they had run all this while a wrong course in seeking to disgrace Arran with the king, whose love towards him was so extreme that he would never suffer a hair of his head to fall to the ground, if he might help it. It was evident, he continued, that as long as Arran should remain in favour with the king, it would be impossible to bring home the lords by fair means; that, unless they might be restored, the league could neither be sure, nor the Master of Gray, and the rest of his party, in safety: for Arran, recovering the king's person, would be able, with his credit, to ruin them, and divert the king from the queen; or, finding his affection towards her irremovable, would not stick to convey him into France. Wotton then proceeded to inform Walsingham of Gray's new plot. It was the advice, he said, of this experienced intriguer that her majesty, having so good occasion ministered by the death of my Lord Russell, should pretend to take the matter very grievously, and refuse to conclude the league for this time. She might then let slip the lords, (meaning Angus and his associates,) who, with some support of money, and their friends in Scotland, might take Arran, and seize on the king's person; in which exploit Gray promised them the best aid he and his faction could give. Gray added, that if Walsingham found this overture well liked at the English court, he would direct a special friend of his and the exiled lords very shortly into England, who might confer with Angus and the rest about the execution of the plot. "This," continued Wotton, addressing Walsingham,² "was the effect of Gray's whole speech,

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 222, Master of Gray to Archibald Douglas, August 14, 1585.

² State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Dumbarton, August 25, 1585. This letter is written partly in cipher; but I quote it from the contemporary decipher written above each character or number.

saving that, in the end, he said, in answer of an objection I made, that he would undertake this thing, being *alone*, to bring the league to a perfect conclusion."

This letter was written on the 25th of August; and so actively did Gray proceed with his plot, that, within a week after, it had assumed a more serious shape. In Scotland he had gained the Earl of Morton, formerly Lord Maxwell, a powerful Border baron, who had been suspected to be in the interest of Arran. In England, not only Angus, Mar, Glammis, and their friends were secured as actors, but also the Lords Claud and John Hamilton, the mortal enemies of Arran, who had remained in banishment since the year 1579, when they were forfeited for the murder of the Regents Moray and Lennox. These two noblemen agreed to a reconciliation with Angus and his party, with whom they had been at feud, and determined to unite against Arran.

Wotton, the English ambassador, lent to all this his active assistance; and his letters to Walsingham, which are still preserved, present us with an interesting picture of the growth of the conspiracy.¹ Some time before this, the Earl of Morton, who was warden of the West Borders, and whom few noblemen in Scotland could surpass in military power and experience, had incurred the resentment of the king by an attack upon the Laird of Johnston, in which he slew Captain Lammie, who commanded a company of the royal forces which James had sent to reinforce Johnston. This enraged the king, who, by the advice of Arran, determined to lead an army against the insurgent;² and at this crisis of personal danger, overtures being made to Morton, he, to secure his safety, readily embraced the offers of Gray, and joined the conspir-

¹ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 1, 1585. This letter is greatly defaced, by some person having erased the proper names and emphatic words; but enough is left to shew the nature of the plot, and the full approval of Wotton. Also, State-paper Office, same to same.

² Ibid., September 30, 1585.

acy.³ This was a great point gained, and gave the utmost satisfaction to Wotton and Walsingham, to whom it was immediately communicated.⁴

But although nothing could exceed the activity and talent (if we may use this term) of Gray and Wotton, in the management of this plot, their efforts were counteracted by the coldness and delays of Elizabeth, and the reviving influence of Arran. This nobleman, still nominally confined to his house at Kinneil, on the charge of being accessory to Lord Russell's death, was yet daily recovering his power over the king's mind: and it was now well known that, having been deceived and thrown off by Elizabeth, he had embraced the interests of France, from which government he had recently received a large supply of money.⁵ Under his protection, Holt, Dury, and Bruce, three noted Jesuits, were secretly harboured in Scotland,⁶ and busily engaged in intrigues for the restoration of the queen-mother, and the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic faith.⁷ Nor was this all. Arran, as we have already seen, could organise plots, and frame secret schemes for surprise and assassination, as well as his enemies. He had been too early educated in the sanguinary and unscrupulous policy of these times not to be an adept in such matters; and whilst Gray and Wotton were weaving their meshes round him, they knew that counterplots were being formed against themselves, of the existence of which they were certain, although they could not detect the agents. The two great factions into which the state of Scotland was divided were thus mutually on their guard, and jealously watching each other; both armed, both intent on their dark purposes, busy in gaining partisans and

³ Historie of James the Sext, pp. 212, 213. State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling.

⁴ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling.

⁵ Original State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 4, 1585, Stirling. Also same to same, August 21, 1585.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Original, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Stirling, September 18, 1585.

in anticipating the designs of their opponents; so that it seemed a race who should soonest spring the mine which was to overwhelm and destroy their adversary.

In such circumstances, nothing could be more painful and precarious than the situation of Wotton, the English ambassador. He knew, and repeatedly wrote to Walsingham, that his life was in danger. His intrigues had been partially discovered by Arran. Colonel Stewart, the brother of that nobleman, and captain of the Royal Guard, had upbraided him for his perfidy before the king; and although the ambassador gave him the lie on the spot, the truth was too well known for any to be deceived by this bravado.¹ It was under the influence of such feelings that he thus addressed Walsingham:—"Though ye in England be slow in resolving, Arran and his faction sleep not out their time: for they are now gathering all the forces they can make, and, within three or four days, Arran meaneth to come to the court, and to possess himself of the king, in despite of the Queen of England, as he saith; which, if he do, I mean to retire myself to the Borders for the safety of my life, whereof I am in great danger, as my friends which hear the Stewarts' threatenings daily advertise me. Your honour knoweth what a barbarous nation this is, and how little they can skill of points of honour. Where every man carrieth a pistol at his girdle, (as here they do,) it is an easy matter to kill one out of a window or door, and no man able to discover who did it. Neither doth it go for payment with those men to say, I am an ambassador, and therefore privileged; for even their regents and kings have been subject to their violence.

"This notwithstanding," he continued, "I would not be so resolute to depart, if, by my tarrying, I might do her majesty any service. But I find the king so enchanted by Arran, and myself so hated of him, as I cannot hope to negotiate to any purpose so

¹ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 22, 1585.

long as Arran shall be in court. If," he added, "the Queen of England would send down the lords, they will be able to work wonders here, and to remedy all inconveniences. If the Queen of England do it not, this country will be clean lost, and all her friends wrecked. Other hope to England than in them I see none; the king being young and easily carried, and most about him either Papists or Atheists."² In a second letter, written to Walsingham on the same day, Wotton added this emphatic paragraph:—

"The Master of Gray,³ through our long English delay, findesth himself driven to a great strait. For the king presseth him greatly to meet with Arran, and threateneth that, unless he do it, he shall have just cause to suspect him. But the Master assureth me he will, by one means or other avoid it, and will hold good these fourteen days. Therefore, what ye will do must be speedily done.

"I am not, for my own part," he added, "the greatest favourer of [violent courses,] and, therefore, have hitherto rather related other men's speeches and opinions than given my advice. But now matters frame so overthwartly as I must needs conclude that no good can be done here, but by the [way] of ——;⁴ which being used, you may bring even the proudest of us to [cry]⁵ for misericorde on our knees."⁶

All was now ripe for execution of the plot. Morton had been gained, and his force was in readiness on the Border. Angus, Mar, and Glammis, with their friends, had, by the mediation of the banished ministers, been reconciled to the Lords Claud and John Hamilton. The Master of Gray, in the meantime, remained at court, and played into the hands of his brother

² State-paper Office, September 22, 1585, Stirling, Wotton to Walsingham.

³ Scored, but tolerably clear.

⁴ Ciphers occur here. The word was probably "violence."

⁵ I put [cry] in brackets, as the word is not clear in the original.

⁶ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 22, 1585, Stirling.

conspirators; watching his opportunities; taking every advantage against the opposite faction; communicating, through Wotton and Archibald Douglas, with the exiled lords and the ministers; and keeping up an intercourse with Morton, by the provost of Lincluden, a Douglas.¹ It was this same fierce partisan who, in the former conspiracy, had been pitched upon to put Arran to death;² and as Gray had declared to Douglas his resolution to "essay" the same again, if it could be quietly and secretly achieved, it is not improbable that the provost may have been again engaged to further the cause by assassinating this hated person. Such being the ripeness of all things, Wotton, who still remained at the Scottish court, although in daily danger of his life, wrote hastily to Walsingham, on the 5th of October, assuring him that the king had resolved to send his forces against Morton before the 20th of October, and would probably lead them in person. Arran, he added, was to be liberated; and if the lords meant to surprise him, and strike the blow with any hope of success, it must be done instantly.³

These arguments had the desired effect; and Elizabeth, being assured that no time was to be lost, commanded her ambassador to require an audience of the King of Scots, and make a peremptory demand for the delivery into her hands of Kerr of Fernyhirst, whom she stigmatised as the murderer of Lord Russell. It was certain that this would be refused; and her object was to afford a pretext for the retirement of Wotton from the Scottish court, at the moment when the conspiracy, which he had organised with such persevering activity, was to take effect.⁴ But matters framed themselves otherwise. Early in October, the banished

¹ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling. Also another letter, written on the same day, from the same to the same.

² MS. Letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585, Caligula, C. viii.

³ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, October 5, 1585, Stirling.

⁴ Copy, State-paper Office, October 12, 1585, Wotton to Walsingham. Also draft, October 11, 1585, Walsingham to Wotton.

lords, Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glammis, who were then in London, received Elizabeth's permission to set out on their enterprise; but by the advice of the ministers of the Kirk, their companions in exile, they first held an exercise of humiliation at Westminster, and with many tears, (so writes the historian of the Kirk,) besought God to strengthen their arm, and grant them success against their enemies.⁵ They then set forward, accompanied by their ministers, Mr Andrew Melvil, Mr Patrick Galloway, and Mr Walter Balcanquel; and pressing forward to Berwick, met there with the Hamiltons and their forces.

These movements could not be concealed; and the tidings flying quickly into Scotland, became known to the king and the English ambassador at the same moment. It was a stirring and remarkable crisis. James by this time was fully aware of the intrigues of Wotton; and resolving to make him a hostage for his own security, gave orders to seize the ambassador in his house, and carry him with the army, which was then on the point of marching against Morton. Wotton, however, received intimation of his danger: at nightfall he threw himself upon a fleet horse, galloped to Berwick, and from that city wrote, in much agitation, to Walsingham and the queen, declaring that he had been plunged into the greatest difficulty by the reports of the advance of the lords; that he knew the king meant to arrest him; and that he had preferred rather to flee from Scotland, and peril her majesty's displeasure, than to remain and thus bring ruin upon the common cause.⁶

All was now confusion at court. Arran, breaking from his ward, hurried from Kinnel to court, and rushing into the young king's presence, declared that the banished lords were already in Scotland, and rapidly coming forward with their forces; accused the Master of Gray as the author of

⁵ Calderwood, MS. Hist., Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1545.

⁶ State-paper Office, October 15, 1585, Berwick, Wotton to Elizabeth; same to Walsingham.

the whole conspiracy, and urged James to send for him instantly, and put him to death.¹ Gray was then absent from court, raising his friends in Perthshire, and was thrown into perplexity and agitation on receiving the king's message. If he disobeyed it, he dreaded the overthrow of the plot, and the retreat of Angus and his friends; if he returned to court, he cast himself within the toils of his mortal enemy Arran. Yet, choosing the boldest, which in such a crisis is generally the most successful course, he braved the peril, rode back to court, entered the royal presence, defended himself from the accusation, and was so graciously received, that Arran and his faction had determined, as their last hope, to stab him even in the king's presence,² when a messenger arrived in fiery haste with the news that the advanced parties of the banished lords had been seen within a mile of Stirling. They had first met at Kelso, separated to raise their men, concentrated their whole troops at Falkirk on the 31st October, and from this marched towards that city, at the head of eight thousand men. To resist such a force would have been absurd. Arran knew that his head was the only mark they shot at; that he was surrounded by enemies within as well as without the town; and that his life was not safe for a moment. As the only resource left him, therefore, he fled secretly from Stirling, accompanied by a single horseman. His retreat was followed by the instant occupation and plunder of the town by Angus and his forces; whilst Montrose, Crawford, and the other lords of the opposite faction threw themselves, as their last resource, into the castle; which (to use the Master of Gray's own expression) was in a manner crammed full of great personages with the king — some friends, some enemies.³ Preparations for a siege were now commenced; and the lords had already set up their banners against the "spur," or principal bastion, when the king sent out the

Master of Gray with a flag of truce, to demand the cause of their coming. They replied, it was to offer their duty to his majesty, and kiss his hands: to which it was answered, that the king was not at that moment solicitous of an interview; but if they would retire for a brief space, their lands and honours should be restored. Still, however, they insisted on a personal interview, and James declared his readiness to agree to it on three conditions: safety to his own person; no innovation to be made in the state; and an assurance for the lives of such persons as he should name. To the two first they instantly consented; to the last they replied, that as they were the injured persons, and their enemies were about the king, they must, for their own security, have them delivered into their hands, with the castles and strengths of the realm.⁴ This negotiation, which was conducted by Gray, the arch-contriver of the whole plot, could only terminate in one way. James was forced to submit: the gates were opened; the Earls of Montrose, Crawford, and Rothes, with Lord Down, Sir William Stewart, and others, made prisoners; and the banished lords conducted into the king's presence. On their admission they fell on their knees; and Lord Arbroath, the head of the house of Hamilton, taking precedence from his near alliance to the crown, entreated his majesty's gracious acceptance of their duty, and declared that they were come in the most humble manner to solicit his pardon. It was strange to see men who, a few hours before, with arms in their hands, had dictated terms of submission to their sovereign, now sue so submissively for mercy: but the scene was well acted on both sides; and James, an early adept in hypocrisy, performed his part with much address.

"My lord," said he to Hamilton, "I never saw you before; but you were a faithful servant of the queen my mother, and of all this company have

¹ Relation of the Master of Gray, by Bannatyne Club, p. 59.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. p. 60.

⁴ Relation of the Master of Gray. Papers of the Master of Gray, printed by Bannatyne Club, p. 60.

been the most wronged. But for the rest of you, (casting his glance over the circle on their knees,) if you have been exiles, was it not your own fault? And as for you, Francis, (he continued, turning to Bothwell,) who has stirred up your unquiet spirit to come in arms against your prince? When did I ever wrong thee? To you all, who I believe meant no harm to my person, I am ready, remembering nothing that is past, to give my hand and heart; on one condition, however, —that you carry yourselves, henceforth, as dutiful subjects.”¹

This interview was followed by measures which shewed that these apparently submissive lords were not disposed to lose their opportunity. Arran was proclaimed a traitor at the market-place, and in the king's name; the royal guard altered, and its command given to the Master of Glamis; the castle of Dumbarton delivered to Lord Arbroath; that of Edinburgh to Coldingknowes; Tantallon to Angus; and Stirling to Mar. On the same day, a pacification and remission was published in favour of the exiles, who now ruled everything at their pleasure. All faults were solemnly forgiven; and the whole of the measures lately carried into effect with such speed and success declared to be done for the king's service.²

Immediately after the seizure of Stirling, the Master of Gray communicated the entire success of the plot to the English court, by letters to the queen herself, Archibald Douglas, and Secretary Walsingham. He assured the English secretary that the banished men were in as good favour as they ever enjoyed: nothing was now required but that Elizabeth should send an ambassador, and the intended league between the two kingdoms would be concluded without delay.³ The queen, accordingly, despatched Sir William Knolles, who had audience at Linlithgow on the 23d November, and was received by James with much

courtesy. The king professed himself to be entirely at her majesty's devotion; declared he was ready to join in league with England, both in matters of religion and civil policy; and that, although at first offended at the sudden invasion of Angus and his friends, he was now satisfied that they sought only their own restitution, and, indeed, had found them so loving and obedient, that he had rather reason to bless God so great a revolution had been effected without bloodshed, than to regret anything that had happened. Knolles, too, as far as he had an opportunity of judging, considered these declarations sincere. He observed no distrust on the part either of the lords or their sovereign. They kept no guard round him, but suffered him to hunt daily with a moderate train; and as Arran had fled to the west coast, and Montrose, Crawford, and the rest of that party were in custody, no fear of change or attack seemed to be entertained.⁴

Such was Knolles's opinion; although, in the end of his letter, he hinted that the king might dissemble according to his custom—a suspicion which next day seemed to have increased.⁵ Apparently, however, these misgivings were without foundation; for a parliament assembled shortly after at Linlithgow, in which it was unanimously resolved that there should be a strict league concluded with Elizabeth.⁶ On this occasion, the king, if we may judge from his address to the three estates, expressed extraordinary devotedness to England, and the most determined hostility to the Roman Catholics. He alluded to the confederating together of the “bastard Christians,” (to use his own words,) meaning, as he said, the Papists, in a league, which they termed holy, for the subversion of true religion in all

⁴ State-paper Office, Mr William Knolles to Walsingham, Linlithgow, November 23, 1585.

⁵ Ibid., Knolles to Walsingham, Linlithgow, November 24, 1585.

⁶ Ibid., certified copy of the Act of Parliament authorising the King of Scots to make league with the Queen's Majesty of England, December 10, 1585.

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 342, 343.

² Relation of the Master of Gray, p. 61.

³ State-paper Office, Master of Gray to Walsingham, November 6, 1585.

realms through the whole world. These leagues, he observed, were composed of Frenchmen and Spaniards, assisted with the money of the King of Spain and the Pope, and must be resisted, if Protestants had either conscience, honour, or love of themselves. To this end, he was determined, he said, to form a counter-league, in which he was assured all Christian princes would willingly join; and as the Queen of England was not only a true Christian princess, but nearest to them of all others, in consanguinity, neighbourhood, and good-will, it was his fixed resolution to begin with her.¹ To second this, the king despatched Sir William Keith with a friendly message to the English queen, requesting her to send down an ambassador, by whose good offices the proposed treaty might be carried into effect;² and Randolph, whose veteran experience in Scottish diplomacy was considered as peculiarly qualifying him for such an errand, was intrusted with the negotiation. He arrived in Edinburgh on the 26th February, having been met at Musselburgh, six miles from the capital, by the justice-clerk, and a troop of forty or fifty gentlemen, many of them belonging to the royal household.

The English ambassador was prepared to find his mission one of no easy execution;³ for in the interval between the parliament at Linlithgow and his arrival at court, the fair prospects anticipated by Gray and Knolles had become clouded. An ambassador had been sent from France, and was reported to have brought with him a freight of French crowns. Holt the Jesuit, and other brethren of that order, were still secretly harboured in the north, supported by Huntly, Montrose, Crawford, and other nobles of the Roman Catholic faith; the agents of the queen-mother were busy with

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, the Scottish king's Speech concerning a League in Religion with England.

² State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, Berwick, February 24, 1585-6.

³ Copy, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to (as I conjecture) Walsingham, January 17, 1585-6.

their intrigues, both in Scotland and in England; and Morton, that powerful baron, whose union with Angus and the Hamiltons had so recently turned the scale against Arran, presuming upon his recent success, openly professed the Roman Catholic faith, and caused mass to be celebrated in the provost church of Lincluden.⁴

All these were ominous appearances; and although James had instantly summoned Morton, and imprisoned him in Edinburgh castle, yet the king was known to be so great a dissembler, that few trusted his professions.

Randolph had been instructed by his royal mistress to congratulate the monarch upon the quiet state of his realm; to express her willingness to proceed with the treaty, for a firm and lasting religious league between the two kingdoms, which had been interrupted; and to warn him against the intrigues of France. He was also to require the delivery of Fernyhirst, who, she still insisted, was guilty of the murder of Lord Russell; to urge James to prosecute Morton for his late audacious contempt of the law; to advise the severest measures against Arran, who still lurked in the west of Scotland; and to insist on the delivery of Holt, Brereton, and other Jesuits; or, at least, to their banishment from his dominions. In return for all this, should it be faithfully performed, Elizabeth declared her readiness to fix a yearly pension on the king, and to grant a solemn promise, under her hand and seal, that she would permit no measures to be brought forward against any title he might pretend to the succession to the English crown.⁵

On being admitted to an audience, which took place on the third day after his arrival, Randolph, at first, found nothing but smiles and fair weather at court. The king assured him that he felt himself bound to the queen his mistress as strictly as if she were his own sister; that he esteemed her advice the best he could possibly

⁴ Spottiswood, p. 344. Copy, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to Walsingham, January 17, 1585-6.

⁵ Original draft, State-paper Office, principal points of Mr Randolph's Instructions.

receive, and meant, God willing, to follow it.¹ Having spoken this so loud that most that stood by could hear it, James, entering into more private talk, told him of the arrival of the French ambassador, and spoke slightly of his youth and ignorance of Scotland and Scotsmen. This led to some remarks on the house of Guise, and the intrigues of the Jesuits; to which the king answered, he had but one God to serve; and as for the Papists, that Morton himself, and some others, would be arraigned within a few days. Before the audience was concluded Randolph exhibited a little packet, "curiously sealed and made up," which he gallantly pressed to his lips, and delivered to the young monarch. It was a private letter from Elizabeth, which James, stepping aside, read with every appearance of devotion; and, placing it in his bosom, declared that all his good sister's desires should be fulfilled.²

These fair professions, however, were not fully to be trusted; for Randolph, in a subsequent conversation with Secretary Maitland and Bellenden the justice-clerk, became aware that great offers had been made to the young king by France; and that, although the royal hand was, as yet, uncontaminated by French gold, the court necessities were so urgent that it was not certain how long this magnanimity might continue. These counter-intrigues, however, were for the present defeated; and the ambassador, with great address, procured the king's signature to the league with England, and sent Thomas Milles, his assistant and secretary, to present it to Elizabeth for her ratification.³ Milles was, at the same time, instructed to warn the English queen to have special care, at that moment, of her own person; and to reveal the particulars of a conspiracy against her, which was then hatching in Scotland. On this delicate point the ambassador wrote both to

Burghley and Walsingham: but he referred simply to Milles' verbal report, and added to the English secretary this ominous sentence: "The men and, perchance, the women are yet living, and their hearts and minds all one, that devised or procured the devilish mischiefs that hitherto, by God's providence, she hath escaped. You have heard, both out of Spain and France, what is to be doubted out of the Low Countries. I have seen what warning hath been given for her majesty to look unto herself; and, in the presence of God, I fear as much despite and devilishness from hence as from them all; though I judge the king as free as myself, and could himself be content that he were out of this country."⁴

These disclosures of Milles to Elizabeth unfortunately do not appear; but there can be no doubt that they were connected with that conspiracy afterwards known as "Babington's Plot." It is certain that this plot had its ramifications in Scotland; that the captive queen had still a powerful party in that kingdom, at the head of which was Lord Claud Hamilton; and many of her adherents were busily intriguing with France, Spain, and Rome. The league with England was distasteful to Secretary Maitland and a large portion of the nobility. They maintained, and with great appearance of reason, that the king, before he had been so readily induced to sign a treaty of so much importance, ought to have secured some commercial privileges to his subjects, similar to those enjoyed by them in France; that Elizabeth should have made some public and explicit declaration regarding their master's title to the English crown; and that the annuity which he was to receive ought to bear some proportion to the large offers of those foreign princes, which his adherence to England had compelled him to refuse. All this, they said, he had neglected; and, without consulting his council, had recklessly rushed into a treaty which

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to _____ (Walsingham?) March 2, 1585-6.

² Ibid.

³ State-paper Office, April 1, 1586, Randolph to Lord Burghley, by Thomas Milles.

⁴ State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, April 2, 1586.

he would speedily repent.¹ This threat seemed prophetic: on Milles's arrival with Elizabeth's signature to the league, James discovered that the pension, which, as first promised by Wotton, amounted to twenty thousand crowns, had dwindled down to four thousand pounds; and the same envoy brought the king a private letter, written with her own hand, in terms of such severe and sarcastic admonition, that it utterly disgusted and enraged him.² It was presented by Randolph, in an interview which he had with James in the garden of the palace; and, as he read it, the young monarch, colouring with anger, swore "by God" that, had he known what little account the queen would make of him, she should have waited long enough before he had signed any league, or disengaged his nobles, to reap nothing but disappointment and contempt.

This fit of disgust was fostered, as may easily be believed, by Secretary Maitland and his friends; and it required all the address of Randolph to soften the royal resentment and hold the king to his engagements. At last, however, everything was arranged, and the ambassador, in a letter to Walsingham, congratulating himself upon a speedy return home, advised this minister to be careful in the choice of his successor at the Scottish court. "Your honour knows," said he, "that *non ex omni ligno fit Mercurius*; and he has need of a long spoon that feeds with the devil."³

Having procured the young king's signature to the articles of the league, Randolph left the Scottish court; and in the succeeding month the negotiation was finally concluded by the commissioners of both countries, who met at Berwick.⁴ In this important treaty,

¹ State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, May 6, 1586. Also original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham's abridgment of Archibald Douglas's letters of the 5th, 6th, and 11th May.

² State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 13, 1586.

³ Ibid., May 28, 1586.

⁴ Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 513. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ran-

olph to Walsingham, June 24, 1586. Ibid., Proclamation at Berwick of the Commissioners, July 5, 1586.

It was agreed between the Queen of England and the Scottish king, that they should inviolably maintain the religion now professed in both countries, against all adversaries, notwithstanding any former engagements to the contrary. If any invasion should be made into their dominions, or any injuries should be offered them by foreign princes or states, no aid was to be given to such foreign attack by either of the contracting parties, whatever league, affinity, or friendship might happen to exist between them and such foreign powers. If England were invaded by a foreign enemy, in any part remote from Scotland, the King of Scots promised, at Elizabeth's request, to send two thousand horse, or five thousand foot, to her assistance, but at her expense; and if Scotland were attacked, the queen was to despatch three thousand horse, or six thousand foot, to assist James; but if the invasion of England should take place within sixty miles of the Scottish Border, James engaged, without delay, to muster all the force he could, and join the English army. If Ireland should be invaded, all Scottish subjects were to be interdicted, under pain of rebellion, from passing over into that kingdom. All rebels harboured within either country were to be delivered up, or compelled to depart the realm; no contract was to be made by either of the princes, with any foreign state, to the prejudice of this league; all former treaties of amity between the predecessors of the two princes were to remain in force; and on the Scottish king's attaining the age of twenty-five he engaged that the "league should be confirmed by parliament; his sister, the English queen, promising the same for her part."⁵ It will be observed that all consideration of the condition or interests of the unhappy Queen of Scots is studiously avoided, both by her son and by Elizabeth. Indeed, her name

dolph to Walsingham, June 24, 1586. Ibid., Proclamation at Berwick of the Commissioners, July 5, 1586.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, Principal points of the articles of the League, July 5, 1586.

does not appear to have been once alluded to during the whole of the transactions. It will, however, be seen by the sequel, that, although no reference was openly made to Mary, the main object of Elizabeth in completing this strict alliance with the son was to detect and defeat the intrigues and conspiracies of the mother.

The happy conclusion of this league was a matter of sincere congratulation to the English queen; but she had intrusted to Randolph another somewhat difficult negotiation. This was to induce James to recall and pardon the well-known Archibald Douglas, whom she had herself recently imprisoned, but who had purchased his freedom by betraying the secrets of the Scottish queen. This gentleman, with whose name and history we are already in some degree familiar, united the manners of a polished courtier to the knowledge of a scholar and a statesman. He was of an ancient and noble house: he had been for years the friend and correspondent of Burghley and Walsingham; and he was now in great credit with the English queen. But Douglas had a dark as well as a bright side; and exhibited a contradiction or anomaly in character, by no means unfrequent in those days: the ferocity of a feudal age, gilded, or lacquered over, by a thin coating of civilisation. Externally all was polish and amenity; truly and at heart the man was a sanguinary, fierce, crafty, and unscrupulous villain. He had been personally present at Darnley's murder, although he only admitted the foreknowledge of it: he had been bred as a retainer of the infamous Bothwell: he had afterwards been employed by the Scottish queen, whom he sold to her enemies; and Elizabeth's great purpose in now interceding for his return from her court to his own country was to use his influence with the young king against his mother and her faction. He now brought a letter written by that princess to the king in his favour;¹

and it is little to James's credit, that he speedily obtained all he asked. A mock trial was got up, a sentence of acquittal pronounced, and Douglas was not only restored to his estates and rank, but admitted into the highest confidence with the sovereign whose father he had murdered. Nay, strange to tell, James held a secret conversation with him on the dark subject of Darnley's assassination; and as Douglas instantly sent a report of it to Walsingham, we get behind the curtain. The king commanded all the courtiers to retire; and, finding himself alone with Douglas, after reading the Queen of England's letter, thus addressed him:—

"At your departure, I was your enemy; and now, at your returning, I am and shall be your friend. You are not ignorant what the laws of this realm are, and what best may agree with your honour to be done for your surety. I must confess her majesty's request in your favour to be honourable and favourable, and your desire to have come by assize² to be honest; and I myself do believe that you are innocent of my father's murder, except in foreknowledge and concealing; a fault so common in those days, that no man of any dealing could misknow;³ and yet so perilous to be revealed, in respect of all the actors of that tragedy, that no man, without extreme danger, could utter any speech thereof, because they did see it and could not amend it: and, therefore, I will impute unto you neither foreknowledge nor concealing; and desire that you will advise by my secretary what may be most agreeable to my honour and your surety in trial, and it shall be performed."⁴ These are remarkable words, and probably come very near the truth as to the foreknowledge of the king's murder possessed by every man of any note or consequence in the court. It is evident the king kept at a distance from all direct mention of

² To have come by assize; to be tried by a jury.

³ Misknow; be ignorant.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, May 6, 1586.

¹ MS. draft, State-paper Office, Elizabeth to James, Scottish Royal Letters, April 6, 1586.

his mother's name. The general expressions which he used may either infer that the queen must have known of the intended murder, but could not, without imminent peril, have revealed or prevented it, or that she knew and permitted it. As to Douglas's own

active share in the murder, it was positively asserted by his servant on the scaffold, and at a moment when there could be no temptation to deny or disguise the truth, that he was present at the explosion, and returned from it covered with soil and dust.

CHAPTER V.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1586, 1587.

ELIZABETH, as has been already hinted, had a great purpose in view, when she concluded this league and sent Archibald Douglas into Scotland. Two months before, her indefatigable minister, Walsingham, had detected that famous conspiracy known by the name of "Babington's Plot," in which Mary was implicated, and for which she afterwards suffered. It had been resolved by Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, and probably by the queen herself, that this should be the last plot of the Scottish queen and the Roman Catholic faction; that the time had come when sufferance was criminal and weak; that the life of the unfortunate, but still active and formidable, captive was inconsistent with Elizabeth's safety and the liberty of the realm. Hence the importance attached to this league, which bound the two kingdoms together, in a treaty offensive and defensive, for the protection of the Protestant faith, and separated the young king from his mother. Hence the eagerness for the return and pardon of Archibald Douglas, who had sold himself to Elizabeth, betrayed the secrets of Mary, and now offered his influence over James to be employed in furthering this great design for her destruction.

It is now necessary to enter upon the history of this plot, and Mary's

alleged connexion with it,—one of the most involved and intricate portions of the history of the two countries. To be clear, and prevent the mind from getting entangled in the inextricable meshes of Walsingham and his informers, it will be proper for a moment to look back. Mary had now been nineteen years a captive; and upon the cruelty and illegality of her imprisonment, during this long and dreary period, there can be but one opinion. She was seized and imprisoned during a time of peace, contrary to every feeling of generosity, and in flagrant violation of every principle of law and justice. On the one hand, it was the right and the duty of such a prisoner to attempt every possible means for her escape; on the other, it was both natural and just that the Catholic party in England and Scotland should have combined with France and Spain to deliver her from her captivity, and avenge upon Elizabeth such an outrage on the law of nations as the seizure of a free princess. But the same party regarded Elizabeth as a heretic, whose whole life had been obstinately opposed to the truth. Some of them went so far as to consider her an illegitimate usurper, whose throne belonged to the Queen of Scots. They had plotted, therefore,

not only for Mary's deliverance, but for the re-establishment of their own faith in England, and for Elizabeth's deposition; nay, some of them, mistaking fanaticism for religion, against Elizabeth's life. All these conspiracies continued more or less during the whole period of Mary's captivity, and had been detected by the vigilance of Elizabeth's ministers, acting through the system of private spies; one of the most revolting features of an age which regarded craft and treachery as necessary parts of political wisdom. With all these plots the Queen of Scots had been, in some degree, either directly or indirectly connected: her rival felt acutely (and such a feeling was the retributive punishment of the wrong she had committed) the misery of keeping so dangerous a prisoner; but up to this time, there seems to have been no allegation that Mary was implicated in anything affecting Elizabeth's life, in anything more, in short, than a series of plots continued at different times for her own escape. Nor did Elizabeth very highly resent them. So far at least from adopting the extreme measures to which she had been advised by many of her councillors, she had repeatedly entered into negotiations with her royal captive, in which she held out the hope of her liberty on the one hand; whilst Mary, on the other, promised not only to forsake all connexion with public affairs, and leave the government to her son, but to impart to her good sister the most valuable secret information. These scenes had been so repeatedly begun, and repeatedly broken off, that they had become almost matters of yearly form. On both sides, in all this, there was probably much suspicion and insincerity; but chiefly on the part of Elizabeth: for Mary, at last sinking under the sorrows of so long a captivity, and worn out by deferred hope, became ready to pay the highest price for freedom; to give up the world, to sink into private life, to sacrifice all except her religion and her title to the throne. It was on this principle that she was ready to enter into that agree-

ment with her son, already alluded to, known by the name of "the association." By the terms of this, James was to continue king; his mother resigning her right into his hands, and taking up her residence, with an allowance according to her rank, either in England or Scotland. Elizabeth, to whom the whole design was communicated, and who was included as a party to the treaty, was to release the Scottish queen, resume with her the friendly relations which had been so often broken off, and receive in return such general good advice, and such secret revelations, as Mary could give consistently with fidelity to her friends.

Now, at the very time when this association seemed to be concluded; when the hopes of the unhappy captive were at the highest; when she was looking forward to her liberty with the delight "which the opening of the prison brings to them that are bound," the cup, for the hundredth time, was dashed from her lips. Throckmorton's treason occurred; a plot still involved in great obscurity. Parry's conspiracy also took place, which included an attempt against the life of the English queen; and the covenant, or "association," for the defence of Elizabeth's person, was concluded at the urgent instance of Leicester, by which "men of all degrees throughout England bound themselves, by mutual vows and subscriptions, to prosecute to the death all who should directly or indirectly attempt anything against their sovereign." It was in vain that Mary disclaimed all connexion with these plots, affirming passionately, and apparently sincerely, that it would be cruel to hold her responsible for all the wild attempts of the Roman Catholic faction who professed to be her friends, but did not inform her of their proceedings; in vain that she offered to sign the association for Elizabeth's safety, and act upon it as if she were her dearest sister. She was met by a cold refusal; the treaty for her freedom was abandoned; the Master of Gray, and Archibald Douglas, men

whom she had implicitly trusted, were bribed to betray her most private transactions; and, as the last and bitterest ingredient in her misery, her own son broke off all intercourse with her, threw himself into the arms of the English queen, and, by the "league" which we have just seen concluded, became the sworn pensioner of her enemy, and the avowed persecutor of that religion which she firmly believed to be the truth. Are we to wonder that, under such circumstances, she renounced her promises to Elizabeth, and, as a last resource, encouraged the Roman Catholics to resume their projects for the invasion of England, her delivery from captivity, and the restoration of what she believed the only true Church?

It is certain that, two years before this, in 1584, she had been cognisant of Throckmorton's plot, already alluded to, which had been got up by the English Catholic refugees in Spain and France for the invasion of England, the dethronement of Elizabeth, and her own delivery. One of the principal managers of this conspiracy was Thomas Morgan, a devoted Catholic, Mary's agent on the continent, a man deeply attached to her interests, and who had been long trained in the school of political intrigue. The rest were Francis Throckmorton, who suffered for it; Thomas, lord Paget; Charles Arundel, who fled to France; and some others. It is extremely difficult to discover what portion of the plot was real, and what fictitious; but that schemes were in agitation against Elizabeth, in which the Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, participated, and with which Mary was well acquainted, cannot be doubted. So clear did her servant Morgan's guilt appear to the King of France, in whose dominions he then resided, that although he refused to deliver him up as Elizabeth required, he threw him into prison, sent his papers to England, and treated him with much severity. Even in this durance, he managed to continue his secret practices; but Mary, who had now entered into negotiations with the queen for her

liberty, renounced, for a season, all political intrigue; and the smouldering embers of the recent conspiracies were allowed to cool and burn out, whilst she looked forward with sanguine hope to her freedom. When, however, this hope was blasted; when she was removed from the gentler custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury to the severer jailership of Paulet;¹ when she was haunted by reports of private assassination, and at last saw Elizabeth and her son indissolubly leagued against her, she resumed her correspondence with Morgan, and welcomed every possible project for her escape.²

At this time Walsingham, the English queen's principal secretary, had brought the system of secret information to a state of high perfection, if we may use such an expression, on the subject. The Queen of Scots, the French and Spanish ambassadors, the English Roman Catholic refugees, were surrounded by his creatures, who insinuated themselves into their confidence, pretended to join their plots, drew them on to reveal their secrets, and carried all their discoveries to their employers. Amongst these base tools of Walsingham, were Poley, a man who had found means to gain the ear and the confidence of Morgan, and been employed by him in his secret correspondence with the Catholics of England and France;³ Gilbert Gifford, a seminary priest of a good family in Staffordshire, who was also intrusted by Morgan with his secrets; Maud, a sordid wretch, who pretended great zeal for the Catholic faith; and some others. He was also assisted by Thomas Phelipps, a person of extraordinary skill in detecting real, and concocting false plots, by forging imaginary letters, and of equal talent in discovering the key to the most difficult and complicated ciphers. In his service, too, was one Gregory, who, by

¹ In October 1584, Mary was removed from the castle of Sheffield to Wingfield; in January 1585-6, from Wingfield to Tutbury; in January 1586-7, from Tutbury to Chartley.

² Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 501.

³ Murdin, p. 499, Morgan to Mary. Ult. Martii, 1586.

reiterated practice, had acquired the faculty of breaking and replacing seals with such nicety, that no eye could suspect the fracture.¹ By means of these agents, Walsingham, about the same time that the league had been concluded between Elizabeth and the King of Scots, discovered a conspiracy for the assassination of that princess. Of this atrocious design, Ballard, a seminary priest, and Savage, an English officer who had served in the Netherlands, were the principal movers; but Morgan, Mary's agent, undoubtedly encouraged the plot, and drew into it some of the English Catholic refugees. At the same time, the former great project for the invasion of England, the dethronement of Elizabeth, and the escape of Mary, was resumed by Spain, France, and the Scottish queen's Catholic friends in England and Scotland; and the captive princess herself became engaged in a secret correspondence on this subject with Morgan, Charles Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, and the French and Spanish ambassadors. Here, then, were two plots simultaneously carrying on; and amongst the actors to whom the execution was intrusted, some persons were common to both—that is, some were sworn to assist alike in the invasion and in the assassination; others knew only of the design against the government, and had no knowledge of the darker purpose against Elizabeth. Amongst these last, up to a certain date which can be fixed, we must undoubtedly class the Scottish queen. She was fully aware of, and indeed was an active agent in, the schemes which were in agitation for the invasion of the country and her own deliverance;² but she was ignorant at first of any designs against the life of her enemy.³ Whether to the last she

remained so ignorant of all, has been disputed; but in the meantime, the predicament in which she stood, as all must see, was one of extreme peril, and so the result proved. Walsingham, through his spies, became acquainted with both plots; and his fertile and unscrupulous mind, assisted and prompted by such an instrument as Phelipps, projected a scheme for involving Mary in a knowledge of both, and thus drawing her on to her ruin. Such being the general design, let us now look more minutely into the history and proceedings of the conspirators.

John Savage, a Roman Catholic gentleman, who had served in the wars of the Low Countries, becoming acquainted with some fanatical priests of the Jesuit seminary of Rheims, was induced, by their arguments, to believe that the assassination of the English queen would be a meritorious action in the sight of God. They argued that the Papal bull, by which this princess was excommunicated, was dictated by the Holy Spirit; and that to slay any person thus anathematised must be accounted an act of faith, and not of murder. Savage, thus worked upon, took a solemn vow that he would kill the queen; and prepared to return to England for the purpose.⁴ Previous to his departure, however, John Ballard, a priest of the same seminary, and a busy agent of Morgan, returned to France, from a tour which he had made amongst the Catholics of England and Scotland. The purpose of his mission thither had been to organise the plot for the invasion of England; the object of his return was to confer upon the same subject with Mendoza the Spanish ambassador, Charles Paget, and the other English Catholic refugees. Ballard was accompanied by Maud, the person already mentioned as a spy of Walsingham, who had deceived Ballard and Morgan, by pretending a great zeal for the Catholic cause; and through this base person the English secretary became

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Original cipher and decipher, endorsed by Phelipps. Papers of Mary Queen of Scots, Pietro, April 24, 1586, and Gilbert Gifford's letter, deciphered by Curle. Pietro was one of the names by which Gilbert Gifford was designated.

² MS., State-paper Office, Morgan to Mary, a decipher in Phelipps's hand, Ult. Martii, 1586, printed in Murdin, p. 481.

³ Murdin, p. 527, Morgan to Mary, July 4, 1586.

⁴ Carte, vol. iii. p. 601; and MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 290, Savage's Confession.

acquainted with all their proceedings.¹ Paget being consulted, argued strongly that no invasion could succeed during the lifetime of Elizabeth; and Ballard, assuming the disguise of a soldier, and taking the name of Captain Fortescue, or Foscue, came back to England much about the same time as Savage, whose fell purpose Morgan had communicated to him.

Soon after his arrival, Ballard addressed himself to Anthony Babington, a young gentleman of large fortune, and ancient Catholic family, in Derbyshire, who had before this shewn great zeal and activity in the service of the Queen of Scots. This was known to Ballard; and he, therefore, confidently opened to him the great scheme for the invasion of England, explained the ardour with which it had been resumed by Morgan and the Scottish queen, and exhorted him to second their efforts by every means in his power. Babington, it is certain, had been long warmly devoted to Mary. He had formed, when he was in France, an intimate friendship with Morgan; had been introduced to Beaton the Bishop of Glasgow, her ambassador in that country; and had returned to England with letters from both these persons, which strongly recommended him to the Scottish queen. From this time, for the period of two years, he had continued to supply her with secret intelligence, and to receive and convey her letters to her friends.² Latterly, however, all intercourse had been broken off; whether for some private cause, or on account of the greater strictness of Mary's confinement, does not appear certain. This interruption of Mary's correspondence with Babington had, however, given distress to Morgan; and most unfortunately, as it happened for the Scottish queen, Morgan had written to her, in urgent terms, on the 9th of May 1586, advising her to renew her secret intercourse with Babington, and describing him as a gentle-

man on whose ability and high honour she might have the firmest reliance.³

On being sought out by Ballard, Babington evinced all his former eagerness for the service of the captive queen; but expressed strongly the same opinion as that already given by Charles Paget, that no invasion or rising in England could succeed as long as Elizabeth lived. Ballard then communicated to him Savage's purpose of assassination; adding, that the gentleman who had solemnly bound himself to despatch that princess was now in England. This revelation produced an immediate effect; and Babington expressed a decided opinion that the simultaneous execution of both plots held out the fairest prospect of success. It would be dangerous, however, he said, to intrust the assassination to only one hand: it might fail, and all would be lost. He suggested, therefore, an improvement, by which the murder should be committed by six gentlemen of his acquaintance, of whom Savage should be one; whilst he pointed out the best havens where foreign troops might be landed; summed up the probable native force with which they were likely to be joined; and demonstrated the surest plan for the escape of the Scottish queen.⁴ With all this Ballard was highly pleased; and from the time when the first meeting with Babington took place,⁵ he and Babington employed themselves in discovering, amongst their acquaintance, such men as they deemed likely to engage in this abominable design. Three were soon procured to join with Savage: their names were Abingdon, the son of the late cofferer of the queen's household; Barnwell, who was connected with a noble family in Ireland; and Charnock, a Catholic gentleman

¹ Murdin, p. 513, Morgan to the Queen of Scots, May 9, 1586, or old style, April 29. Mary and her secretaries always followed the Roman or new style; Walsingham, Burghley, and Phelipps, the old style.

² Murdin, p. 513, Morgan to the Queen of Scots, May 9, 1586, or old style, April 29. Also Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 515.

³ This period or interval cannot be precisely fixed. It seems to have been between the 27th of May and the 25th June.

¹ Carte, vol. iii. p. 601. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 515. Murdin, p. 517, Charles Paget to Mary, May 29, 1586.

² Hardwicke's Papers, vol. i. p. 227.

in Lancashire.¹ Some time after, the number of six was made up by the addition of Charles Tilney, one of the queen's band of gentlemen pensioners, and Chidiock Titchbourne. Other gentlemen of their acquaintance were engaged to assist in the project for the invasion, and the escape of Mary; but the darker purpose of assassination was not revealed to them.²

During all this time, Mary, on account of the strictness of her confinement under Sir Amias Paulet, had found it extremely difficult to continue her correspondence with her friends abroad; but she had never abandoned the project of the Spanish invasion: and on the 5th May, she addressed a letter to Charles Paget, giving minute directions regarding the likeliest method of succeeding in their common enterprise against Elizabeth. From this letter, which, though long, is highly interesting, some passages must be given. They develop the whole plot for the invasion of England, and exhibit a determination in her designs against Elizabeth, which, when known, (as they came to be by the intercession of the letter,) could not fail to excite extreme resentment.

"With an infinite number of other letters in cipher, [so she addressed Paget,] I received five of yours, dated the 14th January, 16th of May, and last of July 1585, and the 4th of February 1586. But, for their late arrival here, and all at once, it hath not been possible for me to see them all deciphered. And I have been, since the departure from Wingfield,³ so wholly without all intelligence of foreign affairs, as, not knowing the present state thereof, it is very difficile for me to establish any certain course for re-establishing the same on this side; and methinks I can see no other means to that end, except the King of Spain, now being pricked in his particular by the attempt made on Holland and the course of Drake, would take revenge

against the Queen of England; whilst France, occupied as it is, cannot help her. Wherefore I desire that you should essay, either by the Lord Paget during his abode in Spain, or by the Spanish ambassador, to discover clearly if the said King of Spain hath intention to set on England."

Mary then proceeded to state, with great force, the reasons which ought to move the Spanish king to adopt this course; after which, she thus expressed her hopes of giving him effectual assistance:—

"Now, in case that he deliberate to set on the Queen of England, esteeming it most necessary that he assure himself also of Scotland, either to serve with him in the said enterprise, or, at the least, to hold that country so bridled that it serve not his enemy; I have thought good that you enter with the ambassador of Spain, in these overtures following; to wit, that I shall travel by all means to make my son enter in the said enterprise; and if he cannot be persuaded thereunto, that I shall dress a secret strait league among the principal Catholic lords of that country, and their adherents, to be joined with the King of Spain, and to execute, at his devotion, what of their parts shall be thought meet for advancing of the said enterprise; so being they may have such succours of men and money as they will ask; which, I am sure, shall not be very chargeable, having men enough within the country, and little money stretching far and doing much there. Moreover," continued Mary, "I shall dress the means to make my son be delivered in the hands of the said King of Spain, or in the Pope's, as best by them shall be thought good; but with paction and promise to set him at liberty, whensoever I shall so desire, or that after my death, being Catholic, he shall desire again to repair to this isle.

. . . This is the best hostage that I and the said lords of Scotland can give to the King of Spain for performance of that which may depend on them in the said enterprise. But withal must there be a regent established in Scotland, that [may] have commission and

¹ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 516.

² MS., State-paper Office, decipher by Phelips, Mary to Mendoza, May 20, 1586.

³ Mary was removed to Wingfield in October 1584.

power of me and my son, (whom it shall be easy to make pass the same, he being once in the hands of the said lords,) to govern the country in his absence; for which office I find none so fit as the Lord Claud Hamilton, as well for the rank of his house, as for his manhood and wisdom; and to shun all jealousy of the rest, and to strengthen him the more, he must have a council appointed him of the principal lords, without whom he shall be bound not to ordain anything of importance. I should think myself most obliged to the King of Spain, that it would please him to receive my son, to make him be instructed and reduced to the Catholic religion, which is the thing in the world I most desire; affecting a great deal rather the salvation of his soul than to see him monarch of all Europe; and I fear much, that so long as he shall remain where he is, (amongst those that found all his greatness upon the maintenance of the religion which he professeth,) it shall never be in my power to bring him in again to the right way; whereby there shall remain in my heart a thousand regrets and apprehensions, if I should die, to leave behind me a tyrant and persecutor of the Catholic Church.

"If you see and perceive the said ambassador to have *goust* in these overtures, and put you in hope of a good answer thereunto, which you shall insist to have with all diligence, I would then, in the meantime, you should write to the Lord Claud, letting him understand how that the King of Spain is to set on this country, and desireth to have the assistance of the Catholics of Scotland, for to stop, at least, that from thence the Queen of England have no succours; and to that effect, you shall pray the said Lord Claud to sound and grope the minds hereunto of the principal of the Catholic nobility in Scotland. . . . And to the end they may be the more encouraged herein, you may write plainly to the Lord Claud, that you have charge of me to treat with him of this matter. But by your first letter, I am not of opinion that you discover yourself

further to him, nor to other at all, until you have received answer of the King of Spain, which being conform to this designation, then may you open more to the Lord Claud; shewing him, that to assure himself of my son, and to the end (if it be possible) that things be passed, and done under his name and authority, it shall be needful to seize his person, in case that willingly he cannot be brought to this enterprise; yea, and that the surest were to deliver him into the King of Spain's hands, or the Pope's, as shall be thought best; and that in his absence, he depute the Lord Claud his lieutenant-general and regent in the government of Scotland, which, you are assured, I may be easily persuaded to confirm and approve. For if it be possible, I will not, for divers respects, be named therein, until the extremity. . . . I can write nothing presently to the Lord Claud himself, for want of an alphabet between me and him, which now I send you herewith enclosed without any mark on the back, that you may send it unto him."¹

Here, then, was Mary's plan, minutely detailed by herself; in which Spain was to "set on England," as she expressed it; Lord Claud Hamilton to be made regent in Scotland; her son, in the event of his refusal to turn Catholic, and combine against Elizabeth, to be seized, imprisoned, and coerced into obedience.

The vigour and ability with which the whole is laid down, needs no comment; and the Scottish queen omitted no opportunity to encourage her friends in that great enterprise which was now regarded as the forlorn hope for the recovery of her liberty, and the restoration of the Catholic faith in Britain.² All this time, however,

¹ MS., State-paper Office, decipher by Phelipps, Queen of Scots to Charles Paget, May 20, 1586, Chartley.

² MS., State-paper Office, Mendoza to the Queen of Scots, May 19, 1586, decipher by Phelipps. Ibid., decipher by Phelipps, Sir Francis Englefield to Nau, May 3, 1586. Ibid., Archbishop of Glasgow to Mary, decipher, May 20, 1586. See *supra*, p. 109, Randolph's intimation of this conspiracy to Walsingham.

Mary had no communication with Ballard. He had been specially warned not to attempt to hold any intercourse with the queen; and she had been informed by Morgan, in a letter written from his prison, that such an agent was in England labouring busily in her behalf, but that there were strong reasons why she should avoid, for the present, all communication with him. "He followeth," said he, "some matters of consequence, the issue whereof is uncertain; wherefore, as long as these labours of his and matters do continue, it is not for your majesty's service to hold any intelligence with him at all, lest he, or his partners, be discovered, and they, by pains or other accidents, discover your majesty afterwards to have had intelligence with them, which I would not should fall out for any good in the world. And I have specially warned the said Ballard," he continued, "not to deal at any hand with your majesty, as long as he followeth the affairs that he and others have in hand, which tend to do good, which I pray God may come to pass; and so shall your majesty be relieved by the power of God."¹

In a postscript of a letter of Morgan's to Curle, Mary's French secretary, written on the same day, which was intercepted and deciphered by Phelipps, an indirect allusion was made to these practices of Ballard against the life of Elizabeth. "I am not unoccupied," said he, "although I be in prison, to think of her majesty's state, and yours that endure with her, to your honours; and there be many means in hand to remove the beast that troubleth all the world."²

But although Mary, thus warned, prudently abstained from any communication with Ballard, she continued in active correspondence with Morgan, Englefield, Mendoza, Paget, and Persons, on the subject of "the great enterprise." The principal person through whom she transmitted

her letters was Gilbert Gifford, who had sold himself to Walsingham. Her letters, accordingly, were regularly intercepted, deciphered by Phelipps, copied, considered by Walsingham, and then forwarded to their destination.³ The English minister, therefore, was quite as well acquainted with the plot for the invasion of the realm, and the insurrection of the Roman Catholics, as the conspirators themselves. He knew, also, the desperate designs of Ballard, Babington, and his fellows, against the queen's life; yet, as Mary had abstained from all intercourse with the conspirators, there was no evidence to connect her with their designs. There might be presumptions against her; (and it seems to me impossible for any one to have read Morgan's allusion to the secret designs of Ballard without having a suspicion of some dark purpose;) but nothing had yet brought her into direct contact with Ballard or Babington. Here, then, was the difficulty; and as Walsingham pondered over the way to remove it, it seems to have fallen out, most unhappily for the Scottish queen, that in consequence of the advice of Morgan, she resolved to renew her correspondence with Babington, who probably about this time had returned from France to England, bringing with him the letter of the 29th April above mentioned.⁴ It has been imagined that Mary was drawn on to renew her correspondence with Babington by a stratagem of Walsingham's; but although Walsingham was busy and ingenious in his stratagems after the correspondence had begun, there is no proof that any measures of his led to its renewal; and it is evident, from what has been already stated, that for this purpose no trick or stratagem was required.

But, however this may be, Mary could not have adopted a more fatal step; indeed, it was the very crisis of her fate. Hitherto, she knew only of the project for the Spanish invasion; and, listening to the suggestions of prudence and

¹ Morgan to the Queen of Scots, Murdin, p. 527.

² MS., State-paper Office, Morgan to Curle, deciphered by Phelipps, 24th June, old style, 4th July, new.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, April 11, 1586.

⁴ *Supra*, p. 116.

suspicion, had connected herself in no way with Ballard and the plot against Elizabeth's life. Had she continued thus cautious, she was ignorant, and she was safe. But Babington arrived in England; his residence lay in the near neighbourhood of Mary's prison; Morgan had given him a letter to that princess, recommending the renewal of their intercourse. The person who then managed the secret conveyance of Mary's letters was the treacherous Gifford. He, we know, would first convey it to Walsingham to be deciphered; it would be then forwarded to the Scottish queen. What a moment of suspense must this have been for the English secretary, who was watching, in silence and concealment, for the evidence which might convict the captive queen! Had she suspected, or hesitated, or delayed, Morgan, who was in communication with Ballard, and likely to be soon informed of Babington having joined the plot against Elizabeth's life, might have warned her against having any communication with him, as he had done against corresponding with Ballard. But Mary, if we are to believe the letters produced on her trial, which, however, she affirmed to be forgeries, had no suspicion. She wrote to Babington, at first briefly: he, if we are to accept as genuine a copy of his letter produced at the trial, replied at great length. In his reply, the scheme for the invasion was connected with the conspiracy for the assassination of the queen. Mary again answered; at least so it was alleged by her enemies, who produced a copy of her reply. She there gave directions for the landing of the troops and her own escape; she alluded also to the assassination; and in her letter, if genuine, certainly did not deprecate it. The agent who managed this secret correspondence was Gifford; the man in whom Babington chiefly confided was Poley. Both were sold to Walsingham: every letter was thus carried first to him, deciphered by Phelipps, copied, and reserved for evidence; every conversation between the conspirators was reported. At last, when

all seemed ripe for execution, the signal was given; Gifford and his base assistants dropped the mask; Walsingham stepped from behind the curtain; Ballard and Babington were seized; and the unfortunate captive, one moment elated with hope, and joyous in the anticipation of freedom, found herself, in the next, detected, entangled, lost. This rapid summary has been given, to bring at one glance, under the reader's eye, the great lines in this miserable and intricate story; and before proceeding to trace it further, one observation must be added. From the system adopted by Walsingham, and the assistance he might derive from the unscrupulous ingenuity of Phelipps, it is clear that, if he were so base as to avail himself of it, he was in possession of a machinery by which he could make Mary appear guilty of any plot he pleased. The letters of her correspondents, Morgan, Babington, Paget, and others, were written in cipher to her, and her replies were conveyed in cipher to them. Both fell into the hands of the English secretary; and, at the subsequent trial of Mary, the two long letters which proved, as was contended, the queen's accession to the plot against Elizabeth's life, were produced,—not in the originals, but in alleged copies of the deciphered documents. Nothing can be more evident than that, under such a system, Mary may have been wholly innocent, and yet may have been made to appear guilty. The real letters which passed between her and Babington, and which were never produced, may have related solely to the great project for the invasion of England, and her escape. The copies of these letters, avowedly taken by Phelipps, Walsingham's servant, may have been so manufactured as to connect the invasion with the assassination of Elizabeth. We shall afterwards see that Mary asserted this was really done: but, meanwhile, let us proceed with the story.

Mary had two secretaries, named Nau and Curle: the first a man of ability, intelligence, and education, but quarrelsome, and fond of political

intrigue; the second, chiefly employed as a clerk and decipherer: both of them enjoying her confidence, and intrusted with the management of her secret correspondence. It does not exactly appear when the Scottish queen received, through Babington, Morgan's letter, recommending the renewal of her correspondence with this gentleman; but, on the 4th July 1586,¹ Curle sent to Gifford, or to the substitute who sometimes acted for him, a packet, in which he enclosed a letter, which he begged him to convey to Anthony Babington. The letter accompanying this packet was in cipher, and in the following words:—

"On Sunday last I wrote unto you by this bearer, having received nothing from you since your letter, dated the 16th of this instant.² I hope to have her majesty's despatch, mentioned in my foresaid, ready for to-morrow seven-night, [conform to] the appointment. In the mean season, her majesty prayeth you to send your footboy, so closely as you can, with these two little bills: the one so ~~Z~~ marked, to Master Anthony Babington, dwelling most in Derbyshire, at a house of his own, within two miles of Winkfield;³ as I doubt not but you know, for that in this shire he hath both friends and kinsmen; and the other bill, without any mark, unto one Richard Hurt Mercer, dwelling in Nottingham Tower. Unto neither of the two foresaid personages your said boy needeth not to declare whose he is, (unless he be already known by them with whom he shall have to do;) but only ask answer, and what is given him, to bring it to your hands; which her majesty assureth herself you will, with convenient diligence, make come unto her. Her majesty desireth that you would, on every occasion you have to write hither, participate unto her such occurrences as come to your knowledge, either foreign or within the realm; and, in particular, what

you understand of the Earl of Shrewsbury his going to court. God preserve you. Chartley, of July the 4th, on Saturday."⁴

This letter, the authenticity of which there is no reason to dispute, is a small slip of paper written wholly in cipher; the decipher being added below it by Phelipps, but much mutilated. It will not, however, escape an attentive reader, that the writer does not specify by whom the enclosed letter to Anthony Babington was written. It may have been from Mary, or it may possibly have been from her secretary Nau, or from Curle. Walsingham and Burghley, indeed, afterwards alleged at the trial, and it was so pleaded, that the enclosure was a letter from the Queen of Scots to Babington; and this enclosed letter is certainly alluded to as extant in a list drawn up by Burghley; but if it ever existed, it is now lost. It was not brought forward at the trial, when Mary demanded to see it, and alleged that no such letter was ever written by her: a *copy* was all that was then produced; and a copy of the decipher is all that we now have.⁵ This letter,

⁴ This letter is preserved in cipher in the State-paper Office, in a most valuable collection of original papers and letters, entitled, "Papers of Mary Queen of Scots." The deciphered part, in Phelipps's hand, is, much of it, illegible. It is now printed, for the first time, from a decipher, by Mr Lemon of the State-paper Office. It is singular, as that gentleman has remarked, that Curle, or Nau, in writing it, made an error in the date. In 1586, the 4th of July, Roman style, which Mary's secretaries used, was on a Friday, not a Saturday; Saturday was the 5th of July, but the writer had mistaken the day of the month. This trivial circumstance appears to me to confirm the authenticity of the letters; and there is another instance of carelessness in it; he speaks, although writing on the 5th July, of the 16th "of this instant;" evidently meaning the 16th June. This tells the same way.

⁵ It may be added, that there is also in the State-paper Office, a copy of the same letter in cipher, made by some unknown hand, most probably Gifford's, on the back of the small ciphered letter already quoted, of date the 4th July, enclosing to Gifford the queen's letter to Babington. It may be conjectured that Gifford, before forwarding the original to Babington, took a copy of it on the back of his own letter. This letter was deciphered for me by Mr Lemon, and is exactly the same as that printed in the text, with the excep-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Curle to ~~f~~, [Gifford,] July 4, Saturday.

² By this is meant the 16th of June.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Curle to ~~f~~, [Gifford,] July 4, Saturday.

purporting to be addressed by Mary to Babington, was as follows :—

" My very good friend, albeit it be long since you heard from me, no more than I have done from you, against my will ; yet would I not you should think I have the meanwhile, or ever will be, unmindful of the effectual affection you have shewed heretofore towards all that concerneth me. I have understood, that upon the ceasing of our intelligence, there were addressed unto you, both from France and Scotland, some packets for me. I pray you, if any be come to your hands, and be yet in place, to deliver them to the bearer hereof, who will make them to be safely conveyed unto me. And I will pray God for your preservation. At Chartley, your assured good friend, MARIE R." ¹

When the packet containing this letter reached Gifford, it was immediately conveyed to Sir Amias Paulet, who transmitted it to Walsingham on the 29th June, with many regrets that it appeared to him too small to contain any very important matter. He, at the same time, informed the English secretary, that Phelipps, who was then in London, and to whom Elizabeth and Walsingham appear to have committed the management of the whole plot for the interception of Mary's letters, had written a letter to him, in which he laid down a new plan of operations, by which he hoped to succeed more surely and speedily. Paulet, however, rejected it as dangerous, and liable, by exciting suspicion, to break off the good course already begun.² He added, that this was the

tion, that the date is thus given in the ciphered letter : " Of June the 25th, at Chartley, by your assured good friend, MARIE R." The long interval between June 25 and July 5, can only be accounted for by supposing that Mary, in writing to Babington, contrary to her usual practice, used the old style ; whilst Curle, or Nau, in writing to Gifford, and enclosing the queen's letter, used the new. The 25th June, old style, was exactly the 5th July, new, as there should be a difference of ten days.

¹ MS. Copy, State-paper Office, Mary to Babington, June 25.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, June 29, 1586. In this letter of Paulet's, which is too long to quote, we ob-

more to be feared, as it was expected that, on the 3d of the month, "great matter" would come from these people. Three days after this letter of Paulet's of the 29th June,³ Mary wrote from Chartley to Morgan, informing him that Pietro, the name given to Gifford in their letters, at his last return from France, had brought her three letters from him, one of which regarded Babington. She stated, also, that she had received an anonymous letter, which, she imagined, came from Poley, who made courteous offers; but she was afraid to deal in it till she had ascertained the matter more certainly; advising Morgan, for the greater security, to keep those persons with whom she had to deal as much as possible unknown to each other. She then added this remarkable passage regarding her intercourse with Babington :—" As to Babington, he hath both kindly and honestly offered himself and all his means, to be employed any way I would ; whereupon I hope to have satisfied him by two of my several letters since I had his. He hath seen that mine hath prevented him with all lawful excuses shewn on my part of the long silence between us." In the conclusion of the same letter, the Scottish queen, in answer to the passage regarding Ballard, already quoted from Morgan's letter of the 4th July,⁴ thus spoke of him :—" I have heard of that Ballard of whom you write, but nothing from himself, and, therefore, have no intelligence with him."⁵

tain a clear view of the machinery and the actors in this secret correspondence. Mary employed a brewer, who supplied the castle, and went by the name of "the honest man," to receive her letters from Gifford. He carried the answers to Gifford again, or to a cousin of his, who acted as his substitute ; and all the three were in the pay of Walsingham and Paulet ; so that the letters of the queen, or her secretaries, were sure to be intercepted, sent to Walsingham, deciphered by Phelipps, and then retransmitted to Paulet, who forwarded them to their destination.

³ On the 12th July, new style, or 2d July old.

⁴ *Supra*, p. 119.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original decipher by Phelipps, Mary to Morgan, 12th July, new style, i.e., 2d July, old.

On the day after, 13th July, Nau, Mary's secretary, wrote to Babington, informing him that his mistress had received his letters "yesternight," that is, on the evening of the 12th July;¹ which letters, he added, before this bearer's return, cannot be deciphered. He then continued:—"He (the bearer) is, within three days to repair hither again, against which time her majesty's letter will be in readiness. In the meantime, I would not omit to shew you, that there is great assurance made of Mr Poley's faithful serving of her majesty; and by his own letters [he] hath vowed and promised the same." But he subjoined this caution. "As yet, her majesty's experience of him is not so great as I dare embolden you to trust him much; he never having written to her majesty but once, whereunto she hath not yet answered. . . . Let me know plainly what you understand of him.—Twelfth July, Chartley.—NAU."²

Although these two letters, the first from Mary to Morgan, the second from Nau to Babington, appear not in the original, but only in the decipher, which is in the handwriting of Phelipps, and must therefore be regarded with suspicion, there seems no sufficient reason for doubting their authenticity; and they establish the fact, that the Scottish queen, at this time, had twice written to Babington, and meant to write again. They prove, also, that, on the 12th July, she had received letters from Babington. But with regard to the subject of his offers to her, or her reply to him, upon which depends the whole question of her guilt, all is still dark.

To understand what occurred next, the reader must keep in mind that, in his secret communications with Mary, Babington sometimes remained at Lichfield in the neighbourhood of Chartley, and sometimes went to London, for the purpose of holding his private meetings with the conspirators, and also of visiting Secretary Walsing-

ham, to whom, strange as it may appear, he had offered himself as a spy upon the practices of the Roman Catholic party. His object in this was evident. He believed that Walsingham knew nothing of his designs; and hoped, under this disguise, to become acquainted with all the secret purposes of the secretary. But Walsingham was too old a diplomatist to be thus taken in; he accepted his offers, and made his own use of them. Hitherto Babington seems to have been in London, when he received, through Gifford or his substitutes, the letters from Mary; but he now proposed to come down to Lichfield, and communicate with her secret messenger in person. It is evident that this change made some alteration necessary on the part of Walsingham and Phelipps; for the delay which must have occurred in having the intercepted letters sent up to London, deciphered, copied, and retransmitted to be delivered again to Babington, would have raised suspicion, and must, in all probability, have led to discovery. Phelipps, therefore, was sent down to Chartley,³ where, on pretence of some other business, he took up his residence with Sir Amias Paulet; and thus no time was lost in deciphering the intercepted letters, and no suspicion raised. In this way Walsingham trusted that he would be enabled, following out what they had begun, to draw the nets more tightly round the Scottish queen, and procure, at last, a clear and positive ground of conviction. Keeping this in view, the correspondence grows more and more interesting.

Phelipps left London for Chartley on the evening of the 7th July,⁴ and on the way thither he met a messenger with a packet from Sir Amias Paulet to Walsingham, which, accord-

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, Chartley, July 14, 1586. Also ibid., Phelipps to Walsingham, Stilton, July 8.

⁴ It is stated by Dr Lingard, that he brought with him Babington's long letter to Mary, and it seems very probable that he did so; but I have found no authority for this, and none is given for it.

¹ July 12, new style; July 2, old.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original decipher by Phelipps, endorsed, Nau to Babington, July 13.

ing to the directions he had received from this minister, he opened. It contained a letter of Mary's to the French ambassador. This the decipherer carried back with him to Chartley, determining to copy it with all speed, and send it up again; adding in his letter, that he knew the ambassador was expecting it earnestly. "By Sir Amias's letter," (to quote his note to Walsingham,) "I find" (said he) "all things to stand in so good terms, as my abode here will be the less, but for Babington's matters, which I beseech you resolve thoroughly and speedily."¹

The arrival of Phelipps at Chartley was not unnoticed by the Scottish queen, whose mind, with the acuteness and suspicion produced by a long captivity, eagerly scrutinised every new person or circumstance which might affect her destiny. She remembered that Morgan had employed many years ago a gentleman of the same name; but she had never seen him. Could this be the same, and was he to be trusted, or might he not be some new spy or eavesdropper of her enemies? To ascertain this, she sent a minute description of his person to Morgan.² He must have arrived at Chartley on the 9th July; and having deciphered the intercepted packet to the French ambassador, he, on the 14th, transmitted it with this letter to Walsingham:—

"It may please your honour, the packet is presently returned, which I stayed, in hopes to send both that and the answer to Ba.³ letter at once; in the meanwhile beginning to decipher that which we had copied out before. And so I send your honour her letter to the French ambassador, which was in cipher, and her letters to the Lord

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, July 8, 1586.

² "He was," she said, "of low stature, slender every way, dark, yellow-haired on the head, and clear yellow-bearded, pitted in the face with small-pocks, short-sighted, and, as it appeared, about thirty years of age." We have here a minute portrait of an acute, unscrupulous, and degraded man; whose talents, as a spy and decipherer, were so successfully employed by Walsingham in the detection and destruction of the Scottish queen.

³ Ba., for Babington.

Claud⁴ and Courcelles out of cipher. Likewise, the short note was sent to Bab., wherein is somewhat only in answer of that concerned Poley in his. *We attend her very heart in the next.* She begins to recover health and strength, and did ride about in her coach yesterday. I had a smiling countenance, but I thought of the verse—

'Cum tibi dicit Ave—sic ut ab hoste Cave.'

I hope by the next to send your honour better matters." . . . The postscript of this letter is important. "If the posts make any reasonable speed, these will be with you by to-morrow noon; and G. G." (he means Gilbert Gifford) "may have delivered his packet and received his answer by Sunday; which then despatched hither, would give great credit to the action; for otherwise we look not to depart this se'nnight, and, therefore, as good all that belonged hereto were done here as at London."⁵

How strange a scene was that now presented by the castle of Chartley, Mary's prison! The poor queen carrying on a plot for her escape; watching anxiously the fate of her letters, on which all depended, and believing all safe; whilst Phelipps, living then under the same roof, and meeting her, as he says, with a smiling countenance, was opening every packet; communicating her most secret thoughts to Walsingham and Elizabeth; and weaving, at her very elbow, the toils in which she was to be caught.

On this same day, the 14th July, Sir Amias Paulet wrote to Walsingham, acquainting him that the packet sent by Mr Phelipps had been thankfully received, with such answer given by writing as the shortness of the time would allow, and a promise made to answer more at length at the return of the honest man, which, he added, would be in three days. This packet, brought down by Phelipps, and thankfully received by Mary, appears to

⁴ Lord Claud Hamilton.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, July 14, 1586, Phelipps to Walsingham, Chartley.

have contained a long letter from Babington. It described the conspiracy for the invasion of the realm, the escape of the Scottish queen, and the assassination of Elizabeth. This letter, which was not produced at the trial, and which Mary denied having ever received, no longer exists, if it ever did exist, in the original; but a copy, in a clerk's hand, has been preserved. Its purport was to excuse his long silence, every means of conveying his letters having been cut off since the time that she had been committed to the custody of such a Puritan as Paulet. He then gave an account of his conference with Ballard; informed her of the intended murder of the Queen of England by six gentlemen selected for that purpose, and of his resolution to set her at the same time at liberty; and he requested her to assign rewards to the actors in this tragedy, or to their posterity, should they perish in the attempt.¹

It is to be remembered that this day, the 14th July, in Sir Amias's letter and Mr Phelipps's, was the 24th July according to the new style, which Mary and her secretaries, Curle and Nau, followed in their letters; and, accordingly, we find that Curle, on the 22d July, new, or 12th July, old style, and on the 27th July, new, or 17th, old, wrote two short letters in cipher, which were deciphered by Phelipps, then at Chartley. They were addressed to Gifford; and in the first he told him that the Queen of Scots had received his letter, dated the 12th of that instant, with its enclosure; that she was grateful for his diligence, but approved of his cousin Gilbert's advice, not to employ frequently a certain person to whom he had alluded. He (Curle) then added this sentence:—"If Mr Babington be past down to the country, for whom this character $\beta\zeta$ shall serve in time coming, her majesty prayeth you to cause convey to him this enclosed, otherwise to stay it until you hear from her majesty again. With my next I shall do my best to satisfy you touch-

ing the other characters. God have you in protection. Of July 22d. CURLE, Chartley."²

In the other letter of the 27th July, Curle wrote to the same person, or to Gilbert Gifford, much to the same purpose, informing him that Mary had received his letter of the 25th instant; that she commended his zeal, and begged him to have "this enclosed surely delivered in the hands of Anthony Babington, if he were come down in the country; otherwise to keep it still in his own hands, or his brother's, until Babington should arrive." He goes on to say that, within ten days, her majesty would have a packet ready to be sent to the French ambassador by his boy, who, by the same means, might also carry the other to Babington at London, if he was not come sooner.³

Here then, at last, is the anxiously expected packet from Mary to Babington, to which, as we have seen, Phelipps alluded in his letter of the 14th July, when he wrote to Walsingham, with such emphatic eagerness, "We attend her very heart in the next." It was enclosed in the packet with this letter of Curle's of the 27th July, and was instantly pounced upon by those who were watching for it. Accordingly, on the 19th July, which, it must be recollectcd, is the 29th July, new style, Phelipps wrote in exultation from Chartley to Walsingham:— "It may please your honour, you have now this queen's answer to Babington, which I received yesternight. If he be in the country, the original will be conveyed into his hands, and, like enough, answer returned. I hope for your honour's speedy resolution touching his apprehension or otherwise, that I may dispose of myself accordingly. I think, under correction, you have enough of him; unless you would discover more particularities of the confederates, which may be done even in his imprisonment. If your honour mean to take him, ample commission and charge would be given to

¹ Carte, vol. iii. p. 603. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 205.

² MS., State-paper Office, cipher and decipher, July 22, Curle.

³ Ibid., July 27, 1586.

choice persons for search of his house. It is like enough, for all her commandment, her letter will not be so soon defaced. I wish it for an evidence against her, if it please God, to inspire her majesty with the heroical courage that were meet for the avenge of God's cause, and the security of herself and this state: at least I hope she will hang Nau and Curle, who justly make Sir Amias Paulet take upon him the name she imputes to him—of a jailer of criminals. . . . I have sent you herewith of this queen's letters in the packet was last sent, those to the Bishop of Glasgow, Don Lewis, and Morgan. . . . She is very bold to make way to the great personage; and I fear he will be too forward in satisfying her for her change till he see Babington's treasons, which I doubt not but your honour hath care enough of not to discover which way this wind comes in. I am sorry to hear from London that Babington was not yet taken, and that some searches, by forewarning, have been frustrated."¹

Phelipps concluded his letter, by cautioning Walsingham against one Thoroughgood, who had applied for a licence to leave the country, and whom he suspected might be Ballard under a feigned name; and added this postscript:—"It may please your honour, by Berdon, or my man, to inform yourself whether Babington be at London or no; which known, we will resolve presently upon return." Paulet also wrote briefly, but joyfully, to Walsingham. His words, he said, would be few; the papers now sent containing matter enough for one time; but he rejoiced that "God had blessed his labours, giving him the reward of true and faithful service; and trusted that the queen, and her grave councillors, would make their profit of the merciful providence of God towards her highness and England."²

It must here be remarked that there seems no good reason to doubt

the perfect authenticity of those two notes of Curle's, of the 22d and 27th July; and, therefore, no ground for questioning the fact that the Queen of Scots had transmitted two several letters to Babington: neither can there be any doubt that the letters of Phelipps, written on his road to Chartley, and during his residence there, are authentic; for they, like Curle's notes, are preserved, and prove themselves. But it is certainly remarkable, and cannot but excite suspicion, that, at this critical moment, the originals of Mary's two letters to Babington, which Phelipps undoubtedly received, and the contents of which proved, as was affirmed, Mary's knowledge of the plot against Elizabeth's life, have both disappeared. Nay, the singularity goes further; for Mary sends two letters to Babington, one on the 25th, the other on the 27th; and only one was afterwards produced against her, and that confessedly not an original. All the other letters of Curle, Morgan, Nau, Gifford, and others, in these intricate doings, have been preserved, and generally with the decipher; but this letter, the most important of all, on which, indeed, the whole question turned, is a copy. At the trial, when this copy was produced and argued on, when Mary solemnly asserted that it was never written by her, and challenged her enemies to shew the original, it was not forthcoming. It is impossible not to regard this as a suspicious circumstance, coupled with the fact already noticed, that the letter of Babington to Mary is in the same predicament, and exists only as a copy; and this suspicion is greatly increased by an assertion of Camden, that, after intercepting and opening the Scottish queen's letter to Babington, Walsingham and his assistant Phelipps cunningly added to it a postscript in the same characters, desiring him to set down the names of the six gentlemen; and it is likely (he observes) other things too.³ Hitherto this statement of Camden, which involves a charge of so dark a kind against Walsingham, has rested on his

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, July 19, 1586.

² Ibid., Paulet to Walsingham, July 20, 1586.

³ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 517.

bare averment, unsupported by all evidence; but I have found recently, in the State-paper Office, a small letter, written wholly in the same cipher as that of Mary's long letter to Babington, and endorsed, in the hand of Phelipps, "The postscript of the Scottish queen's letter to Babington." It runs thus, and certainly gives great support to the allegation of Camden :—"I would be glad to know the names and qualities of the six gentlemen which are to accomplish the designment; for that it may be I shall be able, upon knowledge of the parties, to give you some further advice necessary to be followed therein;¹ as also, from time to time, particularly how you proceed; and as soon as you may, for the same purpose, who be already, and how far every one, privy heretounto."² The exact bearing of this postscript, as a proof of Mary's innocence, will afterwards appear. In the meantime, it is sufficient to remark, that it goes far to establish the fact, that her letters to Babington were tampered with and added to by Walsingham.

Returning, however, to the contents of her reply, we find that Mary, in this real or pretended letter to Babington, entered fully into the details of the intended invasion. She recommended them to examine deeply, first what forces they might raise; what captains they should appoint; of what towns and havens they could assure themselves; where it would be best to assemble their chief strength; what number of foreign auxiliaries they required; what provision of money and armour; by what means the

¹ After this, in the original cipher, follows this sentence scored through, but so as to be quite legible :—"And even so do I wish to be made acquainted with the names of all such principal persons, as also who be already as also who be."

² This was deciphered for me by Mr Lemon of the State-paper Office, who has added this sentence :—"I heréby declare, that the above is a true and literal decipher of the document in the State-paper Office in cipher, endorsed by Phelipps, *The Postscript of the Scottish Queen's letter to Babington*. The lines struck through with the pen are in a similar manner struck through in the original. ROBT. LEMON." The spelling has been modernised.

six gentlemen deliberated to proceed; and in what manner she should be assisted in making her escape. Having weighed all this, she recommended them to communicate the result, and their intentions, to Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, to whom she promised to write: she enjoined on them the greatest caution and secrecy; and, to conceal their real designs, advised them to communicate it only to a few, pretending to the rest of their friends that they were arming themselves against some suspected attack of the Puritans. She then expressed herself in these remarkable words :—

"Affairs being thus prepared, and forces in readiness, both without and within the realm, then shall it be time to set the six gentlemen to work; taking order, upon the accomplishing of their design, I may be suddenly transported out of this place, and that all your forces, in the same time, be on the field to meet me. . . . Nor for that there can be no certain day appointed of the accomplishing of the said gentlemen's designment, to the end that others may be in readiness to take me from hence, I would that the said gentlemen had always about them, or, at the least, at court, four stout men furnished with good and speedy horses, for, as soon as the said design shall be executed, to come with all diligence, to advertise thereof those that shall be appointed for my transporting; to the end that, immediately thereafter, they may be at the place of my abode, before that my keeper can have advice of the execution of the said design, or at least before he can fortify himself within the house, or carry me out of the same. It were necessary to despatch two or three of the said advertisers by divers ways, to the end that if one be staid, the other may come through; and at the same instant, were it also needful, to assay to cut off the post's ordinary ways. This is the plat which I find best for this enterprise, and the order whereby you should conduct the same for our common securities. . . . I shall assay," she continued, "that at the same time that the work shall be

in hand in these parts, to make the Catholics of Scotland arise, and to put my son in their hands ; to the effect that from thence our enemies here may not prevail to have any succour." She then added this caution, little believing that, in the moment she was writing, her cause had been betrayed, "Take heed of spies and false brethren that are amongst you, specially of some priests already practised by our enemies for your discovery ; and in any wise keep never any paper about you that in any sort may do harm ; for from like errors have come the condemnation of all such as have suffered heretofore." . . . In the last place, the queen informed Babington that, for a long time past, she had been a suitor to have the place of her confinement changed, and that Dudley castle had been suggested, to which place it was not unlikely she might be removed by the end of summer. She then observed, "If I stay here, there is for that purpose [her escape] but one of these three means following to be looked [to.] The first, that at one certain day, appointed, in my walking abroad on horseback on the moors, betwixt this and Stafford, where ordinarily you know very few people do pass, a fifty or threescore men, well horsed and armed, come to take me there, as they may easily, my keeper having with him ordinarily but eighteen or twenty horsemen, only with dags.¹ The second mean is, to come at midnight, or soon after, to set fire in the barns and stables, which you know are near to the house ; and whilst that my guardian's servants shall run forth to the fire, your company (having every one a mark whereby they may know one another under night) might surprise the house, where, I hope, with the few servants I have about me, I were able to give you correspondence. And the third : some that bring carts hither, ordinarily coming early in the morning, their carts might be so prepared, and with such cart-leaders, that being cast in the midst of the great gate, the carts might fall down or overwhelm, and

¹ "Dags"—Pistols.

that thereupon you might come suddenly with your followers to make yourself master of the house and carry me away." She concluded her letter with expressions of deep gratitude to Babington : — " Whatsoever issue the matter taketh, I do and will think myself obliged, as long as I live, towards you for the offers you make to hazard yourself as you do for my delivery ; and by any means that ever I may have, I shall do my endeavour to recognise, by effects, your deserts herein. I have commanded a more ample alphabet to be made for you, which herewith you will receive. God Almighty have you in protection !—Your most assured friend for ever. BE Fail not to burn this present quickly."

As soon as Walsingham had procured this letter, which directly implicated Mary, not only in the conspiracy for the invasion, but proved, by inference, her assent to the plot for the assassination of the English queen, he determined to secure Ballard and his fellows on the first opportunity. It was necessary, however, to act with extreme caution. If one of the conspirators was laid hold of before another, the rest might take alarm and escape, the news reach Chartley, and Mary, whose papers he had resolved to seize, might order everything to be destroyed. He was too acute not to anticipate great difficulty even after all he had done and intercepted. The letters of Mary to Morgan and to Babington were not in the queen's hand, but in cipher, and were written by her secretaries, Nau or Curle. She might deny them. The small notes enclosing these letters were also in cipher, and confessedly from Curle and Nau. She might assert that they had written them without her orders, and unknown to her.² The only way of completing the proof was to search her repositories for the original minutes or rough drafts of these letters, and to seize Curle and

² MS. Copy, State-paper Office.

³ The reader will observe that I am here reasoning on the assumption that Mary's letters to Babington, as they appear in the copies, were authentic.

Nau, and compel them to confess all they knew. Hence the extreme danger of giving any alarm at Chartley, which might lead to the destruction of the one or the escape of the other. Babington apparently was still unsuspicious, and in constant communication with Walsingham. Contrary to his original intention, he had given up his plan of going down to Lichfield, and had remained in London, where he held secret meetings with Ballard, Savage, Poley, Dun, and the other conspirators.

In these difficult circumstances, Walsingham was compelled to act rapidly, and yet with caution. He sent for Phelipps, (July 22d,) who remained still at Chartley, busy in the task of deciphering the last letters intercepted, addressed to Mendoza and the French ambassador.¹ Elizabeth, he said, would thank him, on his arrival, with her own lips; but as Babington was still in London, he must bring with him the original letter of Mary to this traitor. It was not, however, brought up by the decipherer till the 27th or 28th, and was then conveyed to Babington by a secret messenger, to whom he promised to have the answer ready by the 2d of August.² And here, in passing, it seems very important to remark, that the original letter of Mary to Babington, the letter which brought home to her the knowledge of the conspiracy against the queen's life, and which has been already fully quoted, was confessedly in the hands of Phelipps the decipherer from the evening of the 18th July, when he intercepted it,³ to the 27th or 28th of the same month, a period of nine days at the least. There was ample time, therefore, to make any changes or additions which might seem necessary for the implication of the Scottish queen. So far with Walsingham all had proceeded well. Babington had received

the important letter, and promised his answer. Meanwhile, the task of arresting Ballard had been committed to Milles, one of Walsingham's secretaries; but this conspirator used so many devices, and glided about so mysteriously, often changing his lodging, that for some time he eluded all their vigilance. At last he was seized and lodged in the Counter, a prison in Wood Street.⁴ Phelipps, however, began to be in great alarm about Babington, who had now become suspicious that they were discovered, and instead of keeping his appointment for the 2d August, had ridden out of town, none knew where. The truth seems to have been that the unhappy man was in an agony of suspense. He had discovered Maud's treachery, and trembled for their plot being on the point of detection. If he fled, the cause was lost. If he remained, it might be to perish miserably. He at last resolved to write to Mary, and returned with the vain hope of still over-reaching Walsingham. His letter to the Scottish queen, dated the 3d August, was intercepted like the rest.⁵ It informed her of their danger, but conjured her not to be dismayed, for all would yet go well. It was God's cause, he said, and that of the Church: it must succeed; and they had sworn to perform it or die. He added, that he would send the answer to her propositions, and their final determination, in the next.⁶ This promised letter, however, he was destined never to write. He returned to London on the 4th August, the day on which Ballard was apprehended; heard the fatal news; attempted a feeble remonstrance with Walsingham; was reassured by the crafty excuses of that veteran intriguer for a few hours; again doubted and trembled; and at last, eluding the men who were set to watch his motions, escaped, in disguise, with some of his companions, and concealed

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, July 22, 1586, Papers of Mary.

² Ibid., Paulet to Walsingham, July 29, 1586, Papers of Mary.

³ Supra, p. 125.

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⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Milles to Walsingham, August 4, 1586.

⁵ Ibid., Phelipps to Walsingham, August 2, 1586.

⁶ Ibid., copy, Babington to the Queen of Scots, August 3, 1586.

himself in St John's Wood, near the city.

Walsingham appears hitherto, in these plots and counterplots, to have acted on his own responsibility ; but it had at length become necessary to determine on Mary's fate; and with this view, he now, for the first time, laid before Elizabeth, in their full extent, the appalling discoveries which he had made; the conspiracy for the invasion of the realm; and that also against her own life. The queen was thunderstruck. She saw her extreme danger. The plot was evidently proceeding in her own dominions, in Scotland, in Spain, perhaps in France ; yet, though its general purpose was clear, its particular ramifications, especially in Scotland, and at Rome, were still unknown. She now recalled to mind Randolph's solemn and warning letter, written from Edinburgh some months before this.¹ The persons to whom he alluded must be fellow-conspirators of Ballard ; and this man, who seemed the principal agent, could probably tell all. Walsingham had used the precaution of apprehending him, simply on the charge of being a seminary priest, and, as such, interdicted by law from entering England. Elizabeth, under these circumstances, commanded Walsingham to keep everything still to himself. It was not time yet, she said, to consult the council ; she and he must act alone ; and it was her advice that he should first bribe some of Ballard's confidants, if he knew of any such, and thus elicit his secrets. She suggested, also, that if any cipher used by the traitor in his correspondence had come to his hands, he might employ it to extract from him the particulars of the plot against her life. It is from Walsingham's answer to this proposition of the queen that the above particulars are drawn ; and the letter itself is too interesting to be omitted. It is as follows :—

"It may please your most excellent majesty, I will, as duty bindeth me, most pointedly observe your majesty's commandment, especially in keeping to myself both the depth and the

¹ Supra, p. 190.

manner of the discovery of this great and weighty cause. The use of some apt instrument towards Ballard, if there could be such a one found as he could confidently trust; or we might stand assured would deal faithfully, nothing would work so good effect as such a course. The party that hath been used between us, seemeth not in any sound concert with him, though he was content for the serving of his turn to use him. Touching the use of a cipher, there is none between him and any other come to my hands, so as nothing can be wrought that way, as your majesty most politely adviseth. Mr Vice-chamberlain² and I are humbly to crave your majesty's directions touching the placing of Ballard afore examination. He remaineth now under a most strait guard in one of the Counters; and for the avoiding of intelligence, there are two trusty³ placed with him to attend on him. In case he shall not lay himself open by disclosing, then were it fit he were committed to the Tower, with two trusty men to attend on him, to the end he may be examined out of hand, and forced by torture to utter that which otherwise he will not disclose."⁴

We must now turn to Mary, who not only remained in utter ignorance of all that happened, but continued her secret correspondence with her foreign friends "greedily," as Paulet expressed it, when he intercepted the packet.⁵ The time had now come to disclose the toils. On the 3d of August, Mr Waad, a privy-councillor, posted from London, met Paulet in the fields near Chartley, and held a secret consultation. Its result was soon seen. The Scottish queen was still fond of the chase. She had cheerfully boasted to Morgan, in one of her letters, that when her enemies were representing her as bedrid she was able to handle her cross-bow, and fol-

² Sir C. Hatton.

³ So in original.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, original drafts, Walsingham to Elizabeth, about 5th or 6th August 1586.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, July 30, 1586.

low a stag.¹ On the morning of the 8th August, her keeper, Paulet, invited her to hunt in the neighbouring park of Tixall, belonging to Sir Walter Ashton: she accepted, rode from Chartley, with a small suite, amongst whom were Nau and Curle her secretaries, and had not proceeded far, when Mr Thomas Gorges encountered them; and, riding up to the queen, informed her of the discovery of the conspiracy; adding, that he had received orders not to suffer her to return to Chartley, but to carry her to Tixall. At the same instant Nau and Curle were seized, kept separate from each other, and hurried away, under a strong guard, to London. Mary was completely taken by surprise. She broke into violent reproaches, and called upon her suite to defend their mistress from the traitors who dared to lay hands on her. But a moment's reflection convinced her they were far too weak for resistance; and she suffered Paulet to lead her to Tixall.² Here, by Elizabeth's orders, she was kept a close prisoner, secluded from her servants, refused the ministry of her private chaplain, served by strangers, deprived of the use of writing materials, and completely cut off from all intelligence. Whilst this scene of arrest was acting in the fields, Mr Waad had arrived at Chartley, where he broke open her repositories, seized her caskets, papers, letters, and ciphers; and was, soon after, joined by Paulet, who took possession of her money. All was then packed up and sealed, preparatory to being sent to Elizabeth, who now appears to have directed every step. This princess was overjoyed at the success which had attended the arrest of Mary: she wrote to Paulet, addressing him as the most faithful of her subjects; promised him a reward "*non omnibus datum;*" and soon after sent a new message, eagerly desiring him to write the whole story of everything

¹ The Queen of Scots to Morgan, July 27, 1586. Murdin, p. 534.

² MS., State-paper Office, Sir Amias Paulet's Postils to Mr William Waad's Memorial. Ibid., Esneval to Courcelles, October 7, 1586.

done to Mary; not that she suspected (as she said) he had omitted any part of his duty, but "simply that she might take pleasure in the reading thereof."³ Above all things, Elizabeth urged the safe keeping, and immediate transmission to her, of the caskets found in the Queen of Scots' repositories. These, and the things contained in them, she declared were, in her esteem, of far greater value than Nau or Curle; and, not content with a written message, she deputed a special envoy from Windsor to look after these treasures and bring them at once.⁴

Shortly before this, Elizabeth had a new triumph in the seizure of Babington and his companions. Till now they had escaped the officers who were in pursuit; but, driven at last by hunger from the woods into the open country, they were apprehended near Harrow, and carried in triumph to London, amid the shouts and execration of the citizens. There was no want of evidence against them, and their own confessions corroborated all; but after the day for their trials had been fixed, and everything seemed ready, the English queen suddenly caught alarm, from the idea that if the charge made by the crown lawyers, and the evidence of the witnesses, deeply implicated Mary, her own life was not safe. Elizabeth had not yet resolved on the trial of the Scottish queen, and the evidence against her was most imperfect. Her two secretaries, Nau and Curle, had as yet confessed nothing which materially involved their mistress. No original minutes of the letters to Babington had been found.⁵ Even if Mary's trial were to take place, it was clear that a considerable interval must

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr Necasius Yetswert to Sir Francis Walsingham, Windsor, August 19, 1586.

⁴ Could it be that the queen expected to find, amongst these treasures, the famous casket, containing the letters of Bothwell, which she had made such strenuous exertions to get into her possession in 1583? Supra, vol. 54. Lingard, 4th edition, vol. viii. p. 212.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, September 3, 1586.

elapse between her arraignment and the execution of the conspirators; and, in this interval, what might not be attempted against her own life? Though some of the leading conspirators were taken, yet many desperate men might still be lurking about court; and so intensely did she feel upon this subject, that, on the evening of the 12th September, the very day before the trial, she sent repeated messages and letters to Burghley, commanding that, in the "indictment," and in the evidence, there should be no enlargement of the Queen of Scots' crime. It was her favourite, Sir Christopher Hatton, the vice-chamberlain, who transmitted these wishes to Burghley; and the reason he gave was that Elizabeth felt that it might be perilous to herself, if anything were given in evidence which touched Mary "criminally for her life."¹

Amid these alarms the trials proceeded; and Babington, Ballard, and Savage, with the rest of the conspirators, being found guilty, were executed on the 20th and 21st of September, with a studied cruelty, which it is revolting to find proceeded from Elizabeth's special orders.

She had at first suggested to her council that some "new device" should be adopted to enhance their tortures, and strike more terror into the people; to which it was answered by Burghley, that the manner of the execution prescribed by law would be fully as terrible as any other new device, if the hangman took care to "protract the action" to the extremity of their pains, and to the sight of the multitude who beheld it.² The executioner, by special direction, did so: but the sight of seven men cut up alive, after being partially strangled, was found to excite the rage and disgust of the multitude; and next day the second seven were permitted

to be executed after a milder fashion.³

But, leaving these cruel scenes, we must turn to the unhappy Mary. On the 25th August, she was removed from Tixall to her former residence at Chartley, under the charge of Sir Amias Paulet, and a body of gentlemen of the neighbourhood, to the number of a hundred and forty horse. This strong escort Elizabeth thought necessary, from the suspicion that many commiserated Mary's fate; and, indeed, Walsingham's letters betrayed considerable uneasiness on the subject. But his apprehensions were needless, for nothing could now be more utterly helpless than the situation of the royal captive. She had been deprived, during her stay at Tixall, of all her servants, and was surrounded by strangers. When seen coming from the gate of the castle, a crowd of poor people assembled round her; and on some asking alms, she answered, weeping, that she had nothing to give. "All has been taken from me," said she: "I am a beggar, as well as you." Then turning to Sir Walter Ashton, the proprietor of Tixall, and the other gentlemen, she again burst into tears, exclaiming, "Good gentlemen, I am not witting of anything intended against the queen." On reaching Chartley castle, her old prison, an affecting incident occurred. The wife of Curle, her secretary, had been confined during the interval between Mary's removal and her return; and before going to her own chamber, the queen, with the affectionate consideration which she always shewed to her servants, went to visit the mother and child. It was a female; and turning to Paulet, who stood by, she begged him, since her own priest was removed from her, to suffer his chaplain to christen the babe, and give it the name of Mary. It might have been imagined that Sir Amias, who constantly talked of Catholicism as idolatry, and believed Protestantism to be the truth, would have welcomed the proposal; but he peremptorily re-

¹ MS. Letter, Burghley to Sir Christopher Hatton, September 12, 1586, discovered by Mr Leigh, who is at present preparing a work on Babington's conspiracy.

² Lingard, 8vo edition, vol. viii. pp. 215, 216.

³ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 518.

fused. The queen said nothing at the time; but retiring for a short season, came again into the room, and taking the infant on her knee, dipped her hand in a basin of water, and sprinkling its face, said, "Mary, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Paulet, in a letter to Walsingham, which described the scene, affected to be shocked at a scandal which he might himself so easily have prevented. He was ignorant, probably, that the Catholic Church, under such circumstances, permitted lay baptism; but the man was of a perverse, churlish temper—a strict Puritan, and, as his letters often shewed, more remarkable for his zeal than his charity.¹ Mary now proceeded to her own apartment; and on reaching it, the keys of the chamber, and of her coffers, were offered to one of her servants, who had been at length suffered to attend on her: but the queen commanded him not to receive them, and bade Mr Darrel, one of Paulet's assistants, open the door. He did so; and on entering, finding her papers seized, and her repositories empty, she expressed herself with deep indignation; declaring that there were two things which the Queen of England could never take from her,—her English blood, and her Catholic religion. She then added, that some of them might yet be sorry for this outrage; a threat which ruffled and disturbed Paulet.²

All the efforts of Elizabeth and Walsingham were now directed to collect conclusive evidence against the Scottish queen. Her secretaries, Nau and Curle, were in their hands, and repeatedly examined; but, up to the 3d of September, their confessions did not materially involve their mistress.³ The evidence connecting her with the general conspiracy for the invasion of the realm was perfectly clear; her

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, August 22, 1586. Ibid., same to the same, August 24, 1586. Ibid., same to the same, August 27, 1586.

² Ibid., same to same, August 27, 1586.

³ Ibid., Walsingham to Phelipps, Sept. 3, 1586.

correspondence with France, Spain, and Scotland, and her secret practices with the Catholics in England, were fully made out. But this was not considered enough; and Walsingham, in despair, wrote to Phelipps, then at Chartley, that Nau and Curle would by no means be brought to confess that they were acquainted with the letters that passed between their mistress and Babington; adding, "I would to God that these minutes could be found!"⁴ It is evident that, by these minutes, the secretary meant such rough drafts, or notes, of Mary's letters to Babington, as he conjectured might be preserved in her repositories: and here we have a clear admission that, unless such were found, the evidence against the Scottish queen was considered incomplete. At this moment of perplexity and difficulty, Burghley wrote to Sir Christopher Hatton, suggesting that it was terror for themselves that kept the Scottish queen's secretaries silent: they refused, as he thought, to implicate their mistress, because it might bring ruin on themselves; "but," he added, "assure them of safety, and then we shall have the whole truth from them. Surely, then," said he, (to use his own revolting expressions,) "they will yield in writing somewhat to confirm their mistress's crime, if they were persuaded that themselves might scape, and the blow fall upon their mistress, betwixt her head and her shoulders."⁵ So jocularly could the aged treasurer anticipate the scaffold and the block for the unhappy victim whom he was so solicitous to sacrifice. On the same day (4th September) Walsingham wrote to Phelipps, who was then at court. "It was evident," he said, "that Mary's minutes were not extant." He directed him, therefore, to seek access to Elizabeth, and persuade her to promise some extraordinary favour to Curle, who had admitted, in general terms, his mistress's correspondence

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, Sept. 3, 1586.

⁵ MS. Letter, Burghley to Sir Christopher Hatton, Sept. 4, 1586; discovered by Mr Leigh Lingard, vol. viii. p. 219.

with Babington, but obstinately refused to be more explicit.¹

Both this person, Curle, and his brother-secretary, Nau, were, in truth, in a difficult dilemma. If they acknowledged that the correspondence between the queen and Babington was in their handwriting, whether the letters were in written characters or in cipher, or whether they related simply to the project of invasion, or included an allusion to the plot against Elizabeth's life, they stood convicted of treason. If they remained obstinate, they had before them the dreadful alternative of the Tower and the torture. They acted as might have been expected in such circumstances: at first denied everything, and at length made a partial admission, which increased the presumptions, but was not conclusive, against the Scottish queen. On the 5th September, the day after Burghley had written to Hatton, Nau, actuated no doubt by Hatton's promises of escape and pardon, described minutely the manner in which Mary managed her secret correspondence. The queen, he said, would never allow anything secret or important to be written anywhere but in her cabinet, himself and Curle sitting at the table. It was her usual practice to dictate the points which she was pleased should be written; he took them down, read them over to her, drew out the letters, again submitted them for correction, and finally delivered them to be put into cipher and disposed of according to her orders. In this manner were written the intercepted letters of the queen to the Archbishop of Glasgow, Charles Paget, and the Spanish ambassador; but as to the letter to Babington, he declared that his mistress had delivered it to him for the most part written in her own hand.² It was Curle, he said, who finally translated and put the letters in cipher; and this same process

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, Sept. 4, 1586.

² MS., State-paper Office, September 5, 1586. Endorsed in Phelipps's hand, "6th September, Copie, Nau his confession of the manner of writing and making up his Mistress' pacquets; and that she wrote Babington's letters with her own hand."

had taken place with this letter as with the rest. This evidence was far from being sufficiently explicit or satisfactory; and various attempts were made to amend it. Burghley now threatened Nau with the Tower;³ and the terror of his commitment drew from him, on the 10th September, a long declaration, addressed privately to Elizabeth; which Burghley threw aside as of no importance, as it did not charge the Scottish queen with any direct accession to the conspiracy for Elizabeth's death, but simply with having previously known that such a plot existed.⁴ The queen, Nau affirmed, had neither invented nor desired, nor in any way meddled with this plot, but had confined herself to the designs for the invasion of the realm and her escape; and at this crisis the unfortunate letter from Babington had arrived, which Mary had received, but did not consider herself bound to reveal. It is quite clear that this declaration, wrung out from Nau, did not corroborate, but rather contradicted, the alleged letter of the Scottish queen to Babington,—a sufficient reason why Burghley should have disregarded it. After an interval of eleven days, Nau and Curle were again examined before the Lord Chancellor, Burghley, and Sir Christopher Hatton. Babington and his companions had been executed the day before: on that same morning seven more conspirators had been drawn to Tyburn. In the interval between this examination and their last, Ballard had been so "racked" that he was carried to the bar and arraigned in a chair;⁵ and it was hoped that, under the influence of terror for a similar fate, the secretaries would declare all. Of this last examination no perfect account has been preserved: but in an original minute drawn up by Phelipps, it is stated that Nau confessed that Curle had deci-

³ Letter, Burghley to Walsingham, Sept. 8, 1586; in Ellis, vol. iii. p. 5.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, September 10, 1586. Endorsed, "Nau's long declaration of things of no importance, sent privately to her Majesty."—This endorsement is wholly in Burghley's hand.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, Secret Advertisements, Babington, September 16, 1586.

phered Babington's letter to Mary : that he (Nau) afterwards took down, from her dictation, the points of her answer; in which his mistress required Babington to consider what forces they might raise, what towns they might assure, where were the fittest places to assemble, what foreign forces were required, what money they should demand, what were the means by which the six gentlemen deliberated to proceed, and in what manner she should be gotten out of the hold she was in.¹ Nau added that there was one other clause of his mistress's letter to Babington, in which she advised the six gentlemen to have about them four stout men with good horses, who, as soon as their purpose was executed, were to bring speedy intelligence to the party appointed to transport the Queen of Scots. This statement of Nau was corroborated by Curle ; who added, that his mistress wished him to burn the English copy of the letters sent to Babington.²

It was now considered that there was sufficient evidence against the Queen of Scots, and there only remained the question of the mode of trial ; nor was this long in deliberation. Elizabeth held a special consultation with Burghley on the 24th September ;³ and after considerable discussion and delay in the privy-council, a commission was issued on the 5th October to thirty-six individuals, including peers, privy councillors, and judges, directing them to inquire into and determine all offences committed against the statute of the 27th of the queen, either by Mary, daughter and heiress of James the Fifth, late King of Scotland, or by any other person whomsoever.⁴ Chasteauneuf, the French ambassador, having heard of these proceedings, demanded, in the name of his master, that the Scottish queen should have counsel assigned her for her defence ; but this was peremptorily refused : and on the 6th of

¹ MS., State-paper Office, September 21, 1586..

² Hardwicke Papers, vol. i. p. 237.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Burghley to Phelipps, September 24, 1586.

⁴ Lingard, vol. viii. p. 222.

October, Sir Amias Paulet, Sir Walter Mildmay, and Mr Barker, a notary, waited on Mary at Fotheringay castle, in Northamptonshire, to which place she had been removed from Chartley, and delivered her a letter from their mistress. It stated briefly and severely, that, to her great and inestimable grief, she understood that Mary pretended, with great protestations, to have given no assent to, and even to have been ignorant of, any attempt against her state and person. It asserted that the contrary would be verified by the clearest proofs ; that she had, therefore, sent some of her chief and ancient noblemen to charge her with having consented to that most horrible and unnatural conspiracy lately discovered ; that, living as she did within the protection of, and thereby subject to her laws, she must abide by the mode of trial which they enjoined ; and she, therefore, required her to give credit to those noblemen who held her commission under the great seal, and make answer to whatever they objected against her.⁵

Mary read the English queen's letter with great composure. "I cannot but be sorry," said she, "that my sister is so ill informed against me, as to have treated every offer made by myself or my friends with neglect. I am her highness's nearest kinswoman, and have forewarned her of coming dangers ; but have not been believed : and, latterly, 'the association' for her majesty's preservation, and the act passed upon it, have given me ample warning of all that is intended against me. It was easy to be foreseen that every danger which might arise to my sister from foreign princes, or private persons, or for matter of religion, would be laid to my charge. I know I have many enemies about the queen. Witness my long captivity, the studied indignities I have received, and now this last association between my sister and my son, in which I was not consulted, and which has been concluded without my consent. As to my answer to the accusa-

⁵ MS. draft, State-paper Office, October 5, 1586.

tion now made," continued Mary, "her majesty's letter is indeed written after a strange sort. It seems to me to partake of the nature of a command; and it is, perhaps, expected that I am to reply as a subject. What!" she then exclaimed, catching fire at the word, whilst her eye flashed, and the colour for a brief space rose in her cheek, "does not your mistress know that I was born a queen? and thinks she that I will so far prejudice my rank and state, the blood whereof I am descended, the son who is to follow me, and the foreign kings and princes whose rights would be wounded through me, as to come and answer to such a letter as that? Never! Worn down as I may appear, my heart is great, and will not yield to any affliction. But why discuss these matters? Her majesty knows the protestation I have once before made to the Lord Chancellor and Lord de la Ware; and by that I still abide. I am ignorant of the laws and statutes of this realm; I am destitute of counsel; I know not who can be my competent peers; my papers have been taken from me; and nobody dareth, or will speak in my behalf, though I am innocent. I have not procured or encouraged any hurt against your mistress. Let her convict me by my words, or by my writings. Sure I am, neither the one nor the other can be produced against me: albeit, I am free to confess that, when my sister had rejected every offer which I made, I remitted myself, and my cause, to foreign princes."¹ A few days after this spirited and dignified answer was reported to Elizabeth, the thirty-six commissioners arrived at Fotheringay, and chose a deputation from their number to wait upon the queen; who, after four successive interviews with them, adhered to her resolution, and declined their jurisdiction. Into the clear and convincing reasons which she alleged for this proceeding it is unnecessary to enter, although it is impossible not to be struck with the spirit, ability, and

talent with which, unbefriended and unassisted by any one, she held her ground against the subtlety and perseverance of her assailants. On one of these occasions, turning to the Lord Chancellor Bromley, she requested him to explain the meaning of that passage in the Queen of England's letter, which affirmed that she was subject to the laws of England, and lived under the queen's protection. "I came," said she, "into England to request assistance, and I was instantly imprisoned. Is that protection?" Bromley was taken by surprise, and contented himself by an evasion. "The meaning of their royal mistress," he said, "was plain; but, being subjects, it was not their part to interpret it."² Elizabeth was immediately informed of this determined refusal of Mary. She learned, at the same time, the resolution of her commissioners to hear the evidence, and pronounce sentence, although the accused declined to plead; and she wrote privately to Burghley, the lord treasurer, commanding him and the other commissioners not to pronounce sentence till they had repaired to her presence and made a report of the whole proceedings.³

It would have been well for Mary had she adhered to this first resolution; but some expressions of Sir Christopher Hatton, the vice-chamberlain, made a deep impression upon her. He had insinuated that her declining to answer would be interpreted as an admission of guilt; he implored her to remember that, even if she refused to appear before the commissioners, (for hitherto Mary had received their deputation in her private chamber,) they must proceed against her in absence; and, at the same moment, she received a brief and menacing note from Elizabeth, in which severity, if she remained obstinate, was blended artfully with a

¹ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 521.

² MS. Letter, copy, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 332. The English queen to Lord Burghley, October 12. MS., State-paper Office, The Queen to the Lord Treasurer and the Commissioners, a draft, in Secretary Davison's hand.

promise of favour, should she relent. It was in these words:—

" You have in various ways attempted to deprive me of my life, and to bring ruin on my kingdom by shedding of blood. I have never proceeded so hardly against you; but, on the contrary, have cherished and preserved you as faithfully as if you were my own self. Your treasons will be proved and made manifest to you in that place where you now are. For this reason, it is our pleasure that you answer to the nobility and barons of my kingdom as you would do to myself were I there in person; and as my last injunction, I charge and command you to reply to them. I have heard of your arrogance; but act candidly, and you may meet with more favour.—ELIZABETH."¹

We may imagine the bitter smile with which the royal captive read this letter, in which Elizabeth, in the nineteenth year of her imprisonment, took credit to herself for the kindness and protection she had extanted to Mary. But there was a menace in its tone which shook her resolution: the last sentence held out a hope of favour: she had no one to advise with; and after a night of much suspense and trouble, she consented to appear before the commissioners.

The court was held on Friday the 14th October, in the great hall at Fotheringay, which had been prepared for the purpose, having, at the upper end, a chair and canopy of state. It bore the arms of England only, and Mary was not suffered to occupy it. On each side of the room were benches for the commissioners. On one hand sat the Lord Chancellor Bromley, the Lord High Treasurer Burghley, with the Earls of Oxford, Kent, Derby, Worcester, Rutland, Cumberland, Warwick, Pembroke, and Lincoln; on the other, the Lords Abergavenny, Zouch, Morley, Stafford, Grey, Lumley, and other peers. Near to these were the knights

of the privy-council, Crofts, Hatton, Walsingham, Sadler, Mildmay, and Paulet. At a short distance in advance were placed the two chief justices of England, and the chief baron of the exchequer: opposite them, the other justices and barons, with two doctors of the civil law; and at a table in the middle sat Popham the queen's attorney-general, Egerton the solicitor-general, Gawdy the queen's sergeant-at-law, the clerk of the crown, and two writers to take down the proceedings.² Before the bar stood such gentlemen and others as were permitted to be present.

On this day, at nine in the morning, Mary, attended by a guard of halberdiers, and leaning on Sir Andrew Melvil and her physician, entered the court. She was dressed in black, with a veil of white lawn thrown over her. One of her maids of honour carried her train, another a chair covered with crimson velvet, another a footstool; and as she walked to her seat, it was observed that she was lame and required support.³ On coming into the middle of this august assembly, the queen bowed to the lords: then observing that her chair was not allowed to be placed under the canopy of state, but lower, and at the side, she appeared to feel the indignity. "I am a queen," said she, looking proudly and resentfully for a moment; "I have married a King of France; and my seat ought to be there." But the feeling was brief; and her features assumed again their melancholy cast, as she regarded the multitude of peers, statesmen, and judges. "Alas!" said she, "here are many counsellors, and yet there is not one for me."⁴ Having then seated herself with great dignity, the Lord Chancellor stood up and declared, that the queen's

² Howel, 1173.

³ British Museum, copy, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 333. Order of the Proceedings at the arraignment of the late unfortunate Queen of Scots at Fotheringay.

⁴ Chasteauneuf to Henry the Third, from the king's library at Paris, October 30, 1586; printed in Life of Lord Chancellor Egerton, p. 86.

¹ This is translated from the French of Chasteauneuf, (Life of Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor, p. 86.) who says he translates it word for word from the English original. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 223.

majesty had at last determined to bring her to trial, in consequence of the practices used by her against her life; that she was not moved to this by personal fear, or from any malice, but because, if she failed to do so, she would be guilty of neglecting the cause of God, and of bearing the sword in vain. He was followed by Burghley the lord treasurer, who requested her to hear their commission, which was read by the clerk. On its conclusion, Mary rose up and answered, that it was well known to all now present, that she had come into England to require assistance; and, contrary to all law and justice, had been made a prisoner. As for any commission empowering them to bring her to trial, no one could grant it, because no one was her superior. She was a free princess, an anointed queen, subject to none but God; she had already delivered a protestation to this effect, and she desired her servants to bear witness that her answers were now made under this protestation.¹ Sergeant Gawdy spoke next; entered into a narrative of the whole plot; and brought forward the arguments, by which (he contended) it must be apparent to all that the Scottish queen was acquainted with the conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth. He explained Ballard's dealing with Morgan and Paget in France, the conspiracy for the invasion of England, and his repair to that country for the purpose of completing the plot; he adverted to the transactions between Ballard and Babington; to the formation of the new conspiracy against the life of the English queen; to the renewal of the correspondence between Mary and Babington, which took place at this moment; and he concluded by contending that she had approved of the plot, had promised her assistance, and pointed out the readiest mode for its execution.²

To this Mary answered, that she

¹ Camden, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 522.

² MS., British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 333. Howell's State Trials, vol. i. pp. 1171, 1182.

had never seen Anthony Babington, nor received any letter from him, nor herself written any to him; that she knew nothing of Ballard, and had never relieved him; as for the Catholics of England, they were oppressed, and took many things hardly. This she knew, and had represented it to the queen her sister, imploring her to take pity on them. She acknowledged, also, that she had received offers of assistance from anonymous correspondents, but she had not embraced such offers; and how was it possible for a captive, shut up in prison, to search out the names or the intentions of unknown persons, or to hinder what they attempted? It was possible that Babington had written such a letter as he described, but let them prove that it had come into her hands;³ and as for her own letters, let them produce them, and she would know what to answer.

Copies of the letter from Babington to the Queen of Scots, and of Mary's alleged answer, were then read; Babington's written confession was also quoted, besides the confessions of Dun, Titchbourne, and Ballard, three of his fellow-conspirators; and it was contended by the Attorney-General Puckering, and by the Lord Treasurer Burghley, that nothing could be clearer than the evidence thus adduced, of direct connivance and approval. Mary, with great readiness, replied, that all this evidence was second-hand, or hearsay. They spoke of the letters which she had received, of the answers she had sent; and they brought forward copies of a long letter from a man whom she had never seen, and a detailed answer, point by point, which she had never written. Was this garbled and manufactured evidence to be produced against her?⁴ Let them produce the originals of these letters, if such originals ever existed. If Babington's letter was in

³ Camden, p. 522.

⁴ Avis de ce qui a este fait en Angleterre par Monsieur de Bellievre sur les affaires de la Royne d'Escosse. Published in Egerton's Life of Lord Chancellor Egerton, pp. 98, 103.

cipher, as was alleged, she would then be able to compare the cipher with the copy now before them, to test the one by the other, and to discover whether it really was written in her alphabet or secret cipher, of which it was possible that her enemies might, by some treachery or other, have procured a copy. And as for her alleged letter to Babington, if it, too, was written in cipher, and the original had been intercepted by them, why was it not now produced? If she was entitled to call for the original of Babington's alleged letter to her, much more were her accusers bound to produce the original of her pretended letter to Babington. She would then be able to examine it, to disprove it, and to detect the fraud which had been practised against her. At present she must be contented with a simple and solemn asseveration that she had not written the letters which had been now read, and that she was guiltless of any plot against the life of the Queen of England.

"I do not deny," said she, weeping, "that I have longed for liberty, and earnestly laboured to procure it. Nature impelled me to do so; but I call God to witness, that I have never conspired the death of the Queen of England, or consented to it. I confess that I have written to my friends, and solicited their assistance in my escape from her miserable prisons, in which she has now kept me a captive queen for nineteen years; but I never wrote the letters now produced against me. I confess, too, that I have written often in favour of the persecuted Catholics; and had I been able, or even now at this moment were I able, to save them from their miseries by shedding my own blood, I would have done it, and would now do it: but what connexion has this with any plot against the life of the queen? and how can I answer for the dangerous designs of others, which are carried on without my knowledge? It was but lately," she added, "that I received a letter from some unknown persons, entreating my pardon if they at-

tempted anything without my knowledge."¹

To this Burghley, who had taken all along a most active part against her, undertook to reply; insisting strongly on the written confession of Babington, and the declarations of her own secretaries, Curle and Nau. This confession, and these declarations, subscribed by the parties themselves who made them, were now on the table; and they proved, he said, in the clearest manner, the correspondence between the queen and Babington. The whole history of it was developed point by point; it was opened by the brief notes written sometimes by Curle, sometimes by Nau; it was they who had deciphered the letters of Babington, and communicated their contents to their mistress. Nay, the exact manner had been specified, in which the answer had been prepared by Nau. It was composed partly from minutes by the queen, and from verbal dictation; it was written out at length in French, revised by Mary, translated and put into cipher by Curle, and then secretly sent to its destination. The letters also of the Scottish queen to Englefield, of a date as far back as 9th October 1584, proved, as he said, that the great plot for the invasion of England was then in agitation; her letter to Charles Paget, on the 21st of May last, (1586,) shewed its resumption at that period; the letter of Charles Paget to the Scottish queen, of the 29th May, connected her with Ballard and Mendoza the Spanish ambassador; and the letters of the 27th July, to Lord Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, Mendoza, the Bishop of Glasgow, and Charles Paget, corroborated not only the confessions of the conspirators, but the contents of the letters between her and Babington, and the written testimony of her own secretaries.

During this address of the Lord Treasurer, he had occasion to mention the Earl of Arundel, as implicated in some degree with the conspiracy; upon which Mary burst into tears,

¹ Avis de Monsieur Bellievre, p. 103. Camden, p. 523.

and lamented, with passionate expressions, the calamities which the noble house of Howard had endured for her sake; but, soon drying her eyes, and reassuming her dignity and composure, she once more, in reply to the arguments of the Lord Treasurer, asseverated her innocence of any plot against the queen's life. What Babington (she said) might, or might not confess against her, she was ignorant of; neither was it possible for her to say or discover, whether this written confession was in his handwriting or not. But why had they executed him before they had confronted him with herself, and permitted her to examine him? If he were now before them, she would have so dealt with him, that the truth would have come out; but they had taken good care to make this impossible. And the same thing might be said of Nau and Curle; why was she not confronted with them? Why was she not permitted to examine them? They, at least, were alive; they might have been here if her adversaries had felt confident that they would have corroborated their written confessions. Curle, she was assured, was an honest man, though it was strange to find one in his station adduced as a witness against her. Nau was a more politic and talented person; he had been secretary to the Cardinal Lorraine, and she had received recommendations in his favour from her brother, the French king; but she was by no means assured that hope, or fear, or reward, might not have influenced him to give false evidence against her; and it was well known that he had Curle at his beck, and could make him write whatever he pleased. It was asserted truly, that her letters were written, and put into cipher, by these secretaries. But what security had she, that they had not inserted into them such things as she had never dictated? Was it not possible, also, that they might have received letters addressed to her, which they never delivered? was it not possible that they might have answered letters in her name, and in her cipher, which she had never seen? "And

am I," said she, with great animation and dignity; "am I, a queen, to be convicted on such evidence as this? Is it not apparent that the majesty and safety of princes falls to the ground, if they are to depend upon the writings and testimony of their secretaries? I have delivered nothing to them, but what nature dictated to me under the desire of recovering my liberty; and I claim the privilege of being convicted by nothing but mine own word or writing. If they have written anything which may be hurtful to the queen, my sister, they have written it altogether without my knowledge: let them bear the punishment of their inconsiderate boldness. Sure I am, that if they were here present, they would clear me of all blame in this cause: and still more certain am I, that had my papers not been seized, and were I not thus deprived of my notes and letters, I could have more successfully and minutely answered every point which has been so bitterly argued against me."¹

In the course of these proceedings (for it would be unjust to call that a trial where the prisoner was deprived of counsel, not permitted access to her papers, and debarred from calling witnesses) Mary made a direct attack on Secretary Walsingham, in speaking of the facility with which her letters and ciphers might be counterfeited. "What security have I," said she, "that these are my very ciphers? A young man, lately in France, has been detected forging my characters. Think you, Mr Secretary, that I am ignorant of your devices used so craftily against me? Your spies surrounded me on every side; but you know not, perhaps, that some of your spies on me proved false, and brought intelligence to me. And if such have been his doings, my lords," she continued, appealing to the assembly, "how can I be assured that he hath not counterfeited my ciphers to bring me to my

¹ MS., British Museum, Caligula, ix. fol 383. Howel's State Trials, vol. i. pp. 1182, 1183. Also Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 523.

death? Has he not already practised against my life and that of my son?" Upon this, Walsingham, rising in his place, warmly disclaimed the imputation. "I call God to witness," said he, "that, as a private person, I have done nothing unbeseeming an honest man; nor, as a public servant of my royal mistress, anything unworthy of my office; but I plead guilty to my having been exceeding careful for the safety of the queen, and this realm. I have curiously searched out every practice against both: nor if Ballard the traitor had offered me his help in the investigation, would I have refused it." With this plausible, but really indirect and evasive disavowal, Mary declared herself satisfied; and after some arguments of the lord treasurer and the crown lawyers, which it is unnecessary to notice, the court adjourned till next morning.

The proceedings on the second day were not materially different from the first. Mary was still alone, unassisted, and, it may be added, undismayed; although at times she gave way to tears, and seemed to feel her desolate condition. She renewed her protestation, declining the jurisdiction of the court; and demanded that it should be recorded. As to the plot itself of which she was accused, some little variation took place in her mode of defence. On the former day she had been wholly ignorant of the circumstances which were to be brought against her; and had commenced her defence by a general denial or disavowal of all treasonable correspondence. She was now aware of the evidence, and partially admitted and defended her letters to Morgan, Paget, and Mendoza; she even acknowledged such notes as, by her secretaries acting under her orders, had been sent to Babington;¹ but she again most pointedly asserted that these notes and letters referred solely to the project for her escape. This project, she said, it was perfectly justifiable in her to encourage by every means, even by the invasion of the realm: she then re-

iterated her denial of being accessory to the conspiracy against the queen's person, and entered into a detail of her repeated offers of accommodation made to that princess. It had been her sincere desire, she affirmed, to remove every ground of dissatisfaction from the mind of her sister; but her proposals were disallowed, or suspected, or despised; so that, remaining a captive, she was driven to practices for her escape. "And now," said she, "with what injustice is this cause conducted against me! My letters are garbled, and wrested from their true meaning: the originals kept from me: no respect shewn to the religion which I profess, or the sacred character I bear as a queen. If careless of my personal feelings, think at least, my lords, of the royal majesty which is wounded through me: think of the precedent you are creating. Your own queen was herself accused of a participation in Wyatt's plot; yet she was innocent; and Heaven is my witness that, although a good Catholic, and anxious for the welfare and safety of all who profess that faith, I would shudder to purchase it at the price of blood. The life of the meanest of my people has been ever dear to me; and far rather would I plead with Esther, than take the sword with Judith; though I know the character that has been given me by my enemies, and how they brand me as irreligious." She then solemnly appealed to God, and to all foreign princes, against the injustice with which she had been treated. "I came into England," she exclaimed, "relying on the friendship and promises of the Queen of England. I came, relying on that token which she sent me. Here, my lords," she said, drawing a ring from her finger, and shewing it to her judges, "here it is; regard it well; it came from your royal mistress; and trusting to that pledge of love and protection, I came amongst you:² you can best tell how that pledge has been redeemed. I desire," said she, in conclusion, "that I may have another

¹ Egerton, p. 103, *Avis de Monsieur Belgrave.*

² Courcelles's *Negotiations*, p. 18, *Bannatyne Club edition.*

day of hearing. I claim the privilege of having an advocate to plead my cause; or, being a queen, that I may be believed upon the word of a queen."¹

The task of answering this appeal was again undertaken by Burghley, who recapitulated the evidence against her; Mary frequently interrupting him by asseverations of her innocence, and a demand for more decided proof. It would now have been the time for the commissioners to deliver their opinions, and to pronounce sentence; but, to the surprise of many present, the court broke up, having adjourned their meeting to the 25th October, at Westminster. The alleged ground of this abrupt measure, was the informality of pronouncing sentence before the record, or official report of the proceedings, was completed: the true cause was the secret letter of Elizabeth already quoted.²

On the same day on which the court broke up, the high-treasurer repaired to his country seat of Burghley, from which he wrote the following letter to Davison. It is valuable, as illustrating the real character of so noted a statesman as Lord Burghley: the approbation with which he speaks of his own eloquence; the complacent description he gives of his success in counteracting the pity which most generous minds would have felt for Mary's desolate condition; and the cold sneer with which he styles her the "Queen of the Castle," are all in keeping with his former unfeeling witticism, on the probability of the blow falling between her neck and shoulders. Here is his letter.

"Mr Secretary,—Yesternight, upon receipt of your letter, dated on Thursday, I wrote what was thought would be this day's work. The Queen of the Castle was content to appear again afore us in public, to be heard: but, in truth, not to be heard for her defence; for she would say nothing but negatively, that the points of the letters that concerned the practice against

the queen's majesty were never by her written, nor of her knowledge. The rest, for invasion, for escaping by force, she said she will neither deny nor affirm. But her intention was, by long artificial speeches, to move pity; to lay all blame upon the queen's majesty, or rather on the council, that all the troubles past did ensue; avowing her reasonable offers and our refusals. And in this her speeches I did so encounter her with reasons out of my knowledge and experience, as she had not that advantage she looked for; as I am assured the auditory did find her case not pitoyable, [and] her allegations untrue, by which means great debate fell yesternight very long, and this day renewed with great stomaching. But we had great reason to prorogue our session till the 25th; and so we of the council will be at court on the 22d; and we find all persons here in commission fully satisfied, as, by her majesty's order, judgment will be given at our next meeting."³

The same day, Walsingham wrote on the same subject to Leicester, declaring that even Mary's best friends thought her guilty; and adding, that but for a secret command of Elizabeth, they would have pronounced sentence. This delay and indecision appears to have so greatly annoyed the secretary, that he represented it as a judgment from heaven, that her majesty had no power to proceed against her as her own safety required.⁴

On the 25th of October, the commissioners met in the Star-chamber at Westminster, and the same proofs were adduced against the Scottish queen which had been brought forward at Fotheringay, with the exception that her secretaries, Nau and Curle, were now examined, and corroborated their letters and confessions.⁵ The former confessions of these two secretaries had been unsatisfactory to Walsingham and Burghley;⁶ they proved the

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 433. Burghley to Davison, October 15, 1586; since, Ellis, vol. i. p. 13.

² MS. Letter, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 415, Walsingham to Leicester, October 15, 1586.

³ Hardwicke Papers, vol. i. p. 224.

⁴ Burghley to Walsingham, September 8.

¹ Camden, pp. 524, 525.

² MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 333. Howel's State Trials, vol. i. p. 1187.

queen to have received letters from Babington, and to have dictated to them certain answers in reply; but, judging from the imperfect papers which remain,¹ there was no certain proof in their confessions that Mary had dictated the passages which implied a knowledge of the conspiracy against Elizabeth's life; and, on this second occasion at Westminster, they merely corroborated their former confessions.² But Nau, if we may trust his own account, did more; for he openly asserted that the principal points of accusation against his royal mistress were false; and, refusing to be silenced by Walsingham, who attempted to overawe and put him down, he declared that the commissioners would have to answer to God and all Christian kings, if, on such false charges, they condemned an innocent princess.³

Into these proceedings against Mary, at Westminster, it is unnecessary to enter further. At Fotheringay we had the accused without the witnesses; at the Star-chamber we have the witnesses without the accused: for Mary remained at Fotheringay under the morose superintendence of Paulet, whilst the investigation proceeded at Westminster, directed by the indefatigable and unrelenting Burghley. Having heard the evidence, the commissioners, as was to be anticipated, pronounced sentence against the queen: declaring that, since the 1st of June, in the twenty-seventh year of Elizabeth, divers matters had been compassed and imagined within this realm of England, by Anthony Babington and others, with the privy of the Queen of Scots, tending to the hurt, death, and destruction of the royal person of her majesty the Queen of England.⁴ They intimated, at the same time, with the object of conciliating the Scottish king, that nothing in this sentence should affect James's title to the English crown; which should remain exactly in the

same state as if the proceedings at Fotheringay had never taken place.

A few days after this, parliament met; and after approving and confirming this sentence, unanimously petitioned Elizabeth, as she valued Christ's true religion, the security of the realm, her own life, and the safety of themselves and their posterity, to consent that the sentence against the Queen of Scots should be published. To enforce their request, they called to her remembrance the anger of God against Saul when he spared Agag king of the Amalekites, and his displeasure with Ahab for pardoning Benhadad.⁵

The answer of Elizabeth was striking, and probably sincere, except in the pity and sorrow it expressed for Mary. She acknowledged, with expressions of deep gratitude to God, her almost miraculous preservation; and professed the delight she experienced, after a reign of twenty-eight years, to find her subjects' good-will even greater to her now than at its commencement. Her life, she said, had been "dangerously shot at;" but her sense of danger was lost in sorrow, that one so nearly allied to her as the Queen of Scots should be guilty of the crime. So far had she herself been from bearing her sister any ill-will, that, upon discovering Mary's treasonable practices, she had written her, that if she would privately confess them they should be wrapt up in silence; and now, if the matter had only involved dangers to herself, and not the welfare of her people, she protested that she should willingly pardon Mary. It was only for her people that she, Elizabeth, desired to live; and if her death could bring them a more flourishing condition, or a better prince, she would gladly lay down her life.

After somewhat more in this strain, she informed parliament that their last act had reduced her to great difficulties; and, in dwelling upon the sorrow felt for Mary, she artfully introduced a circumstance which was well calculated to rouse their utmost

¹ Lingard, vol. viii. p. 219.

² Ibid., p. 229.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Howell, vol. i. p. 1189.

⁵ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 52^a.

resentment: telling them that it was but a short while since she had, with her own eyes, seen and read an "oath, by which some persons had engaged to kill her within a month." This was on the 12th November, and two days after, (14th,) the queen sent the commons a message by her vice-chamberlain, Sir Christopher Hatton, requesting them to consider whether they could not devise some gentler expedient, by which her commiseration for the Scottish queen might be allowed to operate, and her life be spared.¹ On the 18th, after much debate, both houses unanimously answered, "that they could find no other way;" and this brief but stern decision was forthwith carried by the lord chancellor and the speaker of the house of commons to the queen, who was then at Richmond. This communication, it was expected, would elicit something direct and definite from Elizabeth; but the answer which she gave was one of studied ambiguity. "If," said she, addressing the chancellor, "I should say unto you that I mean *not* to grant your petition—by my faith, I should say unto you more than perhaps I mean; and if I should say unto you I mean to grant your petition, I should then tell you more than it is fit for you to know: and so I must deliver you an answer answerless."²

It was now deemed proper that the captive queen should be informed of these proceedings. Since the breaking up of the court at Fotheringay, she had remained there under the custody of Paulet, whose letters to Walsingham breathed a personal dislike to his prisoner. On the 22d November, Lord Buckhurst, and Mr Beal, the clerk of the privy-council, arrived at Fotheringay, and communicated to her the sentence of death, which had been pronounced by the commissioners, its ratification by parliament, and the earnest petition of both Houses for her immediate execution. They

¹ MS. Letter, Sir George Warrender's MS. Collection, Archibald Douglas to the Master of Gray, November 22, 1586, London. Also Archibald Douglas to the King, December 8, Warrender MSS., 1586.

² Parliamentary History, vol. iv. p. 298.

warned her not to look for mercy; spoke severely of her attachment to the Catholic faith, which made her life incompatible with the security of the Reformed opinions; and promised her the ministrations of a Protestant divine in her last hours. The Queen of Scots heard them with the utmost tranquillity, and mildly, but firmly, declined all such religious assistance. She declared that the judgment of the court was unjust, as she was innocent of all consent to the plot against Elizabeth's life; but she implored them, in the name of Christ, to permit her to have the spiritual consolations of her almoner, whom she knew to be in the castle, although debarred from her presence. For a brief period this was granted; but the indulgence was considered too great, and he was once more removed. Further and more studied insults were soon offered. On the day after the arrival of Buckhurst, Paulet entered her chamber without ceremony, and informed her that, as she was now no longer to be considered a queen, but a private woman dead in law, the insignia of royalty must be dispensed with. Mary replied that whatever he or his sovereign might consider her, did not much move her; she was an anointed princess, and had received this dignity from God: into His hands alone would she resign both it and her soul.³ As for their queen, she as little acknowledged her for her superior, as she did her heretical council for her judges; and, in spite of the indignities they offered, would die, as she had lived, a queen. This spirited answer greatly enraged Paulet, who commanded Mary's attendants to take away the "dais," or cloth of state; and, when they refused, called in some of his own people, who executed the order. He then put on his hat, sat down in her presence, and pointing to the billiard-table which stood in the chamber, ordered it to be removed, remarking that these vain recreations no longer became a person in her situation. Such brutal and insolent conduct

³ Martyre de la Royne d'Escosse. Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 293, 294.

would have disgraced the commonest jailer in the kingdom; and the man who was guilty of this outrage, could plead no order from Elizabeth.¹

That princess now gave orders that the sentence against the Queen of Scots should be proclaimed to the people; and so highly excited were the citizens in the metropolis with the real or fancied dangers which they had escaped, that the communication was received with every mark of public rejoicing.² To Mary it brought no new pang, so far as life was concerned; but she became agitated with the suspicion that Elizabeth, to avoid the odium of a public execution, would endeavour to have her privately assassinated; and this new idea gave her the utmost inquietude.³ Nor, if we are to believe Camden,⁴ were these ideal terrors. Leicester, he affirms, on the first discovery of the conspiracy, had given it as his advice that Mary should be privately poisoned; and had even sent a divine to persuade Secretary Walsingham of the lawfulness of such a course, which he, however, utterly rejected and condemned. So horrid an accusation against Leicester would require some decided proof, which the historian has not given; and it will be afterwards seen that Walsingham's aversion to such a course was exceedingly short-lived. It was at this time that Mary addressed her last letter to Elizabeth, in these touching and pathetic terms:—

"Madam.—I bless God with my whole heart that, by means of your final judgment, He is about to put a period to the wearisome pilgrimage of my life. I make no petition that it should be prolonged, having already but too well known its bitterness: I only now supplicate your highness that, since I cannot hope for any favour from those exasperated ministers who hold the highest offices in your state, I may obtain, from your

own sole bounty, these three favours:—

"First, As it would be vain for me to expect a burial in England, accompanied by the Catholic rites practised by the ancient monarchs, your ancestors and mine, and since the sepulchres of my fathers have been broken up and violated in Scotland, I earnestly request that, as soon as my enemies shall have glutted themselves with my innocent blood, my body may be carried by my servants to be interred in holy ground: above all, I could wish in France, where rest the ashes of the queen my most honoured mother. Thus shall this poor body, which has never known repose as long as it was united to my soul, have rest at last, when it and my spirit are disunited.

"Secondly, I implore your majesty, owing to the terror I feel for the tyranny of those to whose charge you have abandoned me, let me not be put to death in secret, but in the sight of my servants and others. These persons will be witnesses to my dying in the faith, and in obedience to the true Church; and it will be their care to rescue the close of my life and the last breathings of my spirit from the calumnies with which they may be assailed by my enemies.

"Thirdly, I request that my servants, who have clung to me so faithfully throughout my many sorrows, may be permitted freely to go where they please, and to retain the little remembrances which my poverty has left them in my will.

"I conjure you, Madam, by the blood of Jesus Christ, by our near relationship, by the memory of Henry the Seventh, our common ancestor, by the title of queen, which I bear even to my death, refuse me not these poor requests, but assure me of your having granted them by a single word under your hand.

"I shall then die, as I have lived,
"Your affectionate Sister and
Prisoner,
"MARY THE QUEEN."⁵

¹ Letter of Mary in Jebb, vol. ii. p. 293.
Also Bissell Mariae Stuartæ Acta, p. 219.

² Lingard, vol. viii. p. 233.

³ Letter of Mary to the Duke of Guise.
Jebb, 334.

⁴ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 519

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⁵ Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 91, 92.

No answer was ever returned to this pathetic appeal, nor indeed is it absolutely certain that Elizabeth ever received it; but in the meantime some exertions to save the Scottish queen were made by the French king, and by her son the King of Scotland. Henry the Third had never, during the long course of her misfortunes, exhibited for Mary any feelings of personal affection or deep interest, although, from political considerations, he had frequently espoused her cause; but the idea that a queen and a near relative should be arraigned, condemned, and executed, was so new and appalling, that he deemed it imperative to interfere, and sent Monsieur de Bellievre, his ambassador, to present his remonstrances to the English queen. After many affected delays, Elizabeth received him in unusual state upon her throne, and heard his message with a flashing eye and flushed and angry countenance.¹ She restrained her feelings, however, sufficiently to make a laboured reply; pronounced a high encomium upon her own forbearance, promised a speedy and definite answer, protracted the time for more than a month by the most frivolous excuses, and at last drove the ambassador to declare that if Mary was executed, his master must resent it. The English queen, fired at this threat, demanded whether his master had empowered him to use such language; and, having found that it was warranted by Bellievre's instructions, wrote a letter of lofty defiance to Henry, and dismissed his envoy. Aubespine, the resident ambassador, renewed the attempt; but a pretended plot against the life of Elizabeth, which was said to be traced to some of his suite, furnished a subject for a new and bitter quarrel; and this, for a time, interrupted all amicable relations between the two crowns.²

On the side of Scotland, James's efforts were not more successful. This young prince had been early informed of the conspiracy by Walsing-

¹ November 27.

² Carte, vol. iii. pp. 613, 614.

ham, and had written to Elizabeth congratulating her upon the discovery.³ The English secretary had employed his friend, the Master of Gray, to sound his royal master as to the intended proceedings against the Queen of Scots; and bade that nobleman remind the young king, that any mediation for Mary would come with a bad grace from a prince whose father had received such hard measure at her hands.⁴

To confirm James in these feelings, care had been taken to send him an account of the plot, with full extracts from the alleged intercepted correspondence of the Queen of Scots and Babington. In these letters, James must have perceived the severe terms in which he was spoken of by Mary, and become acquainted with her advice given to Lord Claud Hamilton, to seize his person and place him under a temporary restraint. Such revelations were little calculated to foster or preserve any sentiments of affection in a son towards a mother whom he had never known. Yet all this cannot excuse the coldness and indifference which he manifested. Monsieur de Courcelles, who was then in Scotland, received instructions from the French king to incite the young monarch to interfere for Mary: but he replied that his mother was in no danger; and as for the conspiracy, she must be contented, he said, to drink the ale she had brewed. He loved her as much as nature and duty bound him; but he knew well she bore him as little good-will as she did the Queen of England: her practices had already nearly cost him his crown; and he could be well content she would meddle with nothing but prayer and serving of God.⁵

These selfish and moderate sentiments were far from acceptable to the Scottish nobles and people, who felt the treatment offered to the mother

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Master of Gray to Burghley, September 10, 1586.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original draft by Walsingham, September 17, 1586.

⁵ October 4. Extract of Monsieur Courcelles's Negotiations, p. 4. Bannatyne edition.

of their sovereign, and the superiority assumed by Elizabeth, as a national insult. Angus, Lord Clàud Hamilton, Huntly, Bothwell, Herries, and all the leading men about court, protested loudly against her insolence, and declared their resolution rather to break into open war, than suffer it to proceed to further extremity.¹ On this subject, indeed, the feelings of the nobles had become so excited, as to impel them to speak out with fierce plainness to the king himself. James, it seems, suspected that Elizabeth would send an ambassador to persuade him to remain passive, whatever extremities might be adopted against his mother; and turning to the Earl of Bothwell, a blunt soldier, he asked his advice what he should do. "If your majesty," said he, "suffers the process to proceed, I think, my liege, you should be hanged yourself the day after." George Douglas also (the same brave and attached friend of Mary who had assisted in her escape from Lochleven) remonstrated in strong terms with his royal master; warning him to beware of giving credit to the lying tales of some about him, who were the pensioned slaves of Elizabeth, and paid to create bad blood between him and his parent. "And yet," answered James, "how is it possible for me to love her, or to approve her proceedings? Did she not write to Fontenay, the French ambassador here, that unless I conformed myself to her wishes, I should have nothing but the lordship of Darnley; which was all my father had before me? Has she not laboured to take the crown off my head, and set up a regent? Is she not obstinate in holding a different religion?" "For that matter," said Douglas, "she adheres to her faith, in which she hath been brought up, as your majesty doth to yours; and, looking to the character of your religious guides, she thinks it better that you should come over to her views than she to yours." "Ay, ay," said the king, "truth it is I have been brought

up amid a company of mutinous knavish ministers, whose doctrine I could never approve; but yet I know my religion to be the true one."

In the meantime, the alarming news from England, and the representations of the French king, convinced James that the question was no longer as to the imprisonment, but the life of Mary; and the moment he embraced this idea, his whole conduct changed. He wrote a letter of strong and indignant remonstrance to Elizabeth, and despatched it by Sir William Keith, who was instructed to express himself boldly, and without reserve, upon the subject. He at the same time, and by the same ambassador, addressed a threatening note to Walsingham, whom he considered his mother's greatest enemy; and he commanded Keith, on his arrival at the English court, to co-operate with the French ambassador in all his efforts for the safety of the unhappy princess, whose fate seemed to be so fast approaching. He had already written strongly to Archibald Douglas, his ambassador at the English court.² But it was suspected, on good grounds, that Douglas was wholly in the hands of Elizabeth and Walsingham; and currently said that, as he had been at the father's murder, he would have his hand as deep in the mother's death.³

On Keith's arrival at the English court,⁴ Elizabeth and her ministers attempted to frustrate the object of his mission, by the usual weapons of delay and dissimulation. When at last admitted, the queen affected the utmost solicitude for Mary's life; but represented herself as driven to extremities by the remonstrances of her ministers, and the fears of her people. "And yet," said she, turning to the ambassador, "I swear by the living

² Appendix to Robertson's History of Scotland, No. xlix, King James to Archibald Douglas, October 1586. Also same, No. 1, Archibald Douglas to the King, October 16, 1586.

³ Lodge's Letters, vol. ii. (8vo edition) p. 295, Master of Gray to Archibald Douglas, December 9, 1586.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Keith to Davison, November 5, 1586, London.

¹ Extract of Courcelles's Negotiations, pp. 11, 13. Bannatyne Club edition.

God, that I would give one of my own arms to be cut off, so that any means could be found for us both to live in assurance.¹ I have already," she continued, "saved her life, when even her own subjects craved her death; and now judge for yourselves which is most just, that I who am innocent, or she who is guilty, should suffer."² Repeated interviews took place, and Elizabeth on one occasion declared that no human power should ever persuade her to sign the warrant for Mary's execution; but in the meantime the sentence against her had been made public. Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham advised her death. The people, alarmed by reports of the meditated invasion by Spain, and new plots against their princess, became clamorous on the same subject; and James, agitated by the ill success of Keith, sent him new instructions, with a private letter written in passionate and threatening terms.³ On communicating it to the English queen, she broke into one of those sudden and tremendous paroxysms of rage, which sometimes shook the council-room, and made the hearts of her ministers quail before her. It was with the greatest difficulty that she was prevented from chasing Keith, who had spoken with great boldness, from her presence. But Leicester, her favourite, at last appeased her, and on the succeeding day she dictated a more temperate reply to the young king. On his side, also, James repented of his violence, and, unfortunately for his own honour, was induced to adopt a milder tone; to write an apologetic letter to Elizabeth; and to despatch the Master of Gray and Sir Robert Melvil with instructions to explain that his "meaning, in all that had hitherto been done," was modest and not menacing.⁴ Nothing could be

¹ Sir George Warrender MSS., B. fol. 341, Archibald Douglas to James, December 8, 1586.

² MS., Warrender, B. fol. 333, Douglas to the Master of Gray, November 22, 1586.

³ Warrender MSS., B. 341, Douglas to the King, December 8, 1586.

⁴ MS. Letter, copy, Warrender MSS., B. fol. 336, King James to Elizabeth, December 15, 1586.

more selfish and pusillanimous than such conduct. The Scottish nation and the nobility were loud in their expressions of indignation. Eager to avenge the disgrace inflicted on their country, the nobles had already armed themselves, to break across the Border, and take the quarrel into their own hands; but the king, who had received a private communication from Walsingham,⁵ was thinking more about his succession to the English crown than the peril of his parent; and, intimidated by the violence of Elizabeth, judged it better to conciliate than exasperate. It is difficult to believe that James had any very deep desire to save his mother's life, when he selected so base and unworthy an intercessor as the Master of Gray. The king must have known well that this man had already betrayed her; that he was a sworn adherent of Elizabeth; and that Mary's safety, or return to power and influence, brought danger to this envoy himself. So fully were these Gray's feelings, that in a letter to his friend Archibald Douglas, written as far back as October 11, he described "any good to Mary as a staff for their own heads;" and assured him "he cared not although she were out of the way."⁶ The result was exactly what might have been anticipated: Gray, on his arrival at the English court, (29th December,) in his public conferences with Elizabeth and her ministers, and in the open despatches intended for the eyes of the Scottish council, exhibited great apparent activity and interest in the cause of the Scottish queen.⁷ But this was all unreal, for secretly he betrayed her; co-operated with Archibald Douglas in his enmity; whispered in Elizabeth's ear the significant proverb, "The dead don't bite;" persuaded her that, although there was much

⁵ Warrender MSS., B. fol. 334, a memorial of certain heads to be communicated to the Lord Secretary of Scotland.

⁶ Lodge, vol. ii. (8vo edition,) p. 289. See also Murdin, pp. 573-576.

⁷ Robertson's Appendix, No. 1., a Memorial for his Majesty, by the Master of Gray, January 12, 1586-7.

clamour, there was little sincerity in his master's remonstrances; and, notwithstanding the honest endeavours of Sir Robert Melvil against his base efforts, encouraged her to proceed to those extremities which she was willing, yet afraid to perpetrate.¹

In her first interview with these new ambassadors, Elizabeth received their offers with her characteristic violence. They proposed that Mary should demit her right of succession to the English crown to her son. "How is that possible?" said the queen; "she is declared 'inhabil,' and can convey nothing." "If she have no rights," replied Gray, "your majesty need not fear her; if she have, let her assign them to her son, in whom will then be placed the full title of succession to your highness." "What!" said Elizabeth, with a loud voice and great oath, "get rid of one, and have a worse in her place? Nay; then I put myself in a more miserable case than before. By God's Passion, that were to cut mine own throat; and for a duchy or an earldom to yourself, you, or such as you, would cause some of your desperate knaves to kill me. No, by God! your master shall never be in that place." Gray then craved that Mary's life might at least be spared for fifteen days, to give them time to communicate with the king; but this she peremptorily refused. Melvil implored her to give a respite, were it only for eight days. "No," said Elizabeth, rising up, and impatiently flinging out of the apartment, "not for an hour."² After such a reception, it was impossible not to anticipate the worst; and although, on a succeeding occasion, the queen appeared somewhat mollified, the ambassadors left her with the conviction that fears for herself, and not any lingering feelings of mercy towards Mary, were the sole causes of her delay.

It was at this time that the Scottish king, having required the ministers of the Kirk to pray for his unhappy mother, then in the toils of her ene-

mies and daily expecting death, received a peremptory refusal. This was the more extraordinary, since James had carefully worded his request so as to remove, as he thought, every possibility of opposition; but finding himself deceived, he directed Archbishop Adamson to offer up his prayers for the queen, in the High Church of the capital. To his astonishment he found, on entering his seat, that one of the recusant ministers, named Cowper, had pre-occupied the pulpit. The king addressed him from the gallery: told him that the place had been intended for another; but added that, if he would pray for his mother, he might remain where he was. To this Cowper answered, that he would do as the Spirit of God directed him; a significant reply to all who knew the character of the times, and certainly amounting to a refusal. A scene of confusion ensued. James commanded Cowper to come down from the pulpit; he resisted. The royal guard sprang forward to pull out the intruder; and he descended, denouncing woe and wrath on all who held back; declaring, too, that this hour would rise up in witness against the king, in the great day of the Lord. Adamson then preached on the Christian duty of prayer for all men, with such pathetic eloquence, and so powerfully offered up his intercession for their unfortunate queen, that the congregation separated in tears, lamenting the obstinacy of their pastors.³

Meanwhile, reports were circulated in England, which were artfully calculated to inflame the people and to excuse severity towards Mary. It was said one day, that the Spaniards had landed at Milford Haven, and that the Catholics had joined them; the next, that Fotheringay castle was attacked, and that the Queen of Scots had made her escape; then came rumours that the northern counties were already in rebellion, and that a new conspiracy was on foot to slay the queen and set fire to London.⁴

¹ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 533.

² Robertson's Appendix, No. 1., Memorial of the Master of Gray, January 12, 1586-7.

³ Spottiswood, p. 334.

⁴ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 533.

Amidst these fictitious terrors, the privy-council held repeated meetings, and pressed Elizabeth to give her warrant for the execution : Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham entreated, argued, and remonstrated ; but she continued distracted and irresolute between the odium which must follow the deed and its necessity. At last, amid her half sentences and dark hints, they perceived that their mistress wished Mary to be put to death, but had conceived a hope they would spare her the cruelty of commanding it, and find some secret way of despatching her ; she even seemed to think that, if their oath to "the association" for her protection did not lead to this, they had promised much, but actually done nothing. From such an interpretation of their engagement, however, they all shrunk. The idea of private assassination was abhorrent, no doubt, to their feelings ; but they suspected, also, that Elizabeth's only object was to shift the responsibility of Mary's death from her shoulders to theirs ; and that nothing was more likely than that, the moment they had fulfilled her wishes, she should turn round and accuse them of acting without orders. Meanwhile she became hourly more unquiet, forsook her wonted amusements, courted solitude, and often was heard muttering to herself a Latin sentence taken from some of those books of *Emblematæ*, or *Aphorisms*, which were the fashion of the day : *Aut fer, aut feri ; ne feriare, feri.*¹ This continued till the 1st of February, when the queen sent for Mr Davison the secretary, at ten in the morning. On arriving at the palace, he found that the Lord Admiral Howard had been conversing with Elizabeth on the old point—the Scottish queen's execution ; and had received orders to send Secretary Davison to her with the warrant, which had already been drawn up by Burgh-

ley the lord treasurer,² and lay in his possession unsigned. Davison hastened to his chamber, and coming instantly back with it and some other papers in his hand, was called in by Elizabeth, who, after some talk on indifferent topics, asked him what papers he had with him. He replied, divers warrants for her signature. She then inquired whether he had seen the lord admiral, and had brought the warrant for the Scottish queen's execution. He declared he had, and delivered it into the queen's hand ; upon which she read it over, called for pen and ink, deliberately signed it, and then looking up, asked him whether he was not heartily sorry she had done so ? To this bantering question he replied gravely, that he preferred the death of the guilty before that of the innocent, and could not be sorry that her majesty took the only course to protect her person from imminent danger. Elizabeth then commanded him to take the warrant to the chancellor and have it sealed, with her orders that it should be used as secretly as possible ; "and by the way," said she, relapsing again into her jocular tone, "you may call on Walsingham and shew it him : I fear the shock will kill him outright." She added, that a public execution must be avoided. It should be done, she said, not in the open green or court of the castle, but in the hall. In conclusion, she forbade him absolutely to trouble her any further, or let her hear any more till it was done ; she, for her part, having performed all that in law or reason could be required.³

The secretary now gathered up his papers, and was taking his leave, when Elizabeth stayed him for a short space, and complained of Paulet and others, who might have eased her of this burden. "Even now," said she, "it might be so done, that the blame might be

² Caligula, C. ix. fol. 470. For a minute and interesting account of the whole proceedings of Davison, see Sir Harris Nicolas's Life of Davison. pp. 79, 105.

³ Davison's Defence, drawn up by himself, in Caligula, C. ix. fol. 470. printed by Nicolas, life of Davison, Appendix A.

removed from myself. Would you and Walsingham write jointly, and sound Sir Amias and Sir Drew Drury upon it?" To this Davison consented, promising to let Sir Amias know what she expected at his hands; and the queen, having again repeated, in an earnest tone, that the matter must be closely handled, dismissed him.¹

All this took place on the morning of the 1st of February. In the afternoon of that day, Davison visited Walsingham, shewed him the warrant with Elizabeth's signature, consulted with him on the horrid communication to be made to Paulet and Drury, and repairing to the chancellor, had the great seal affixed to the warrant. The fatal paper was then left in the hands of that dignitary; and Walsingham and Davison the same evening wrote and despatched a letter to Fotheringay, recommending to her keepers the secret assassination of their royal charge, at the queen their mistress's special request. This letter, taken from an original found amongst Paulet's own papers,² was in these calm and measured terms:—

“ TO SIR AMIAS PAULET.

“ After our hearty commendations. We find by speech lately uttered by her majesty, that she doth note in you both a lack of that care and zeal for her service that she looketh for at your hands; in that you have not in all this time, o' yourselves, (without other provocation,) found out some way to shorten the life of that queen; considering the great peril she is subject unto hourly, so long as the said queen shall live. Wherein, besides a lack of love towards her, she noteth greatly that you have not that care of your own particular safeties, or rather of the preservation of religion, and the public good and prosperity of your country, that reason and policy commandeth; especially having so good a warrant and ground for the satisfaction o' your consciences towards God, and the discharge of your credit and re-

putation towards the world, as the oath of 'association,' which you both have to solemnly taken and vowed; and especially the matter wherewith she standeth charged being so clearly and manifestly proved against her: and therefore she taketh it most unkindly that men, professing that love towards her that you do, should in any kind of sort, for lack of the discharge of your duties, cast the burden upon her; knowing, as you do, her indisposition to shed blood, especially of one of that sex and quality, and so near to her in blood as the said queen is.

“ These respects, we find, do greatly trouble her majesty, who, we assure you, has sundry times protested that if the regard of the danger of her good subjects and faithful servants did not more move her than her own peril, she would never be drawn to assent to the shedding her blood. We thought it very meet to acquaint you [with] these speeches lately passed from her majesty, referring the same to your good judgments. And so we commit you to the protection of the Almighty. Your most assured friends,

“ FRANCIS WALSHAM.

“ WILLIAM DAVISON.

“ London, February 1, 1586.”³

With the letter, Davison sent an earnest injunction that it should be committed to the flames; promising for his part to burn, or, as he styled it, “ make a heretic” of the answer. Cruel and morose, however, as Paulet had undoubtedly been to Mary, he was not the common murderer which Elizabeth took him to be; and refused peremptorily to have any hand in her horrid purpose. He received the letter on the 2d of February, at five in the afternoon, and at six the same evening, having communicated it to Drury, returned this answer to Walsingham:—

“ Your letters of yesterday, coming to my hands this present day at five in the afternoon, I would not fail, according to your directions, to return my answer with all possible speed;

¹ Nicolas's Life of Davison, p. 84.

² Life of Davison, p. 85. Hearne's Robert of Gloucester, vol. ii. p. 676.

³ Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, by Hearne, vol. ii. p. 674.

which [I] shall deliver unto you with great grief and bitterness of mind, in that I am so unhappy to have liven to see this unhappy day, in the which I am required, by direction from my most gracious sovereign, to do an act which God and the law forbiddeth. My good livings and life are at her majesty's disposition, and I am ready to lose them this next morrow, if it shall so please her: acknowledging that I hold them as of her mere and gracious favour. I do not desire them to enjoy them but with her highness's good liking; but God forbid that I should make so foul a shipwreck of my conscience, or leave so great a blot to my poor posterity, to shed blood without law and warrant. Trusting that her majesty, of her accustomed clemency, will take this my dutiful answer in good part . . .¹

This refusal, as we have seen, was written on the 2d February, in the evening, at Fotheringay; and next morning, (the 3d, Friday,) Davison received an early and hasty summons from Elizabeth, who called him into her chamber, and inquired if he had been with the warrant to the chancellor's. He said he had; and she asked sharply why he had made such haste. "I obeyed your majesty's commands," was his reply, "and deemed it no matter to be dallied with." "True," said she; "yet methinks the best and safest way would be to have it otherwise handled." He answered to this, that, if it was to be done at all, the honourable way was the safest;² and the queen dismissed him. But by this time the warrant, with the royal signature, was in the hands of the council; and on that day they addressed a letter, enclosing it, to the Earl of Shrewsbury. This letter was signed by Burghley the lord treasurer, Leicester, Hunsdon, Knollys, Walsingham, Derby, Howard, Cobham, Sir Christopher Hatton, and Davison himself.³ Yet some fears as to the responsibility of

¹ Hearne's Robert of Gloucester, vol. ii. p. 675.

² Davison's Apology, in Nicolas's Life, Appendix A.

³ Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. pp. 111, 112.

sending it away without the queen's knowledge, made them still hesitate to despatch it. In this interval, Paulet's answer arrived; and as Walsingham, to whom he had addressed it, was sick, (or, as some said, pretended illness,) the task of communicating it to Elizabeth fell on Davison. She read it with symptoms of great impatience; and, breaking out into passionate expressions, declared that she hated those dainty, nice, precise fellows, who promised much, but performed nothing, casting all the burden on her. But, she added, she woud have it done without him, by Wingfield. Who this new assassin was, to whom the queen alluded, does not appear.⁴

The privy-council, meanwhile, had determined to take the responsibility of sending off the warrant for the execution upon themselves; and for this purpose intrusted it to Beal, the clerk of the council, who, on the evening of Saturday the 4th of February, arrived with it at the seat of the Earl of Kent, and next day, being Sunday, proceeded to Fotheringay, and communicated it to Sir Amias Paulet and Sir Drew Drury.⁵ Intelligence was then sent to the Earl of Shrewsbury, grand marshal of England, who lived at no great distance from Fotheringay; and on Tuesday morning, the 7th February, this nobleman and the Earl of Kent came to the castle with several persons who were to give directions, or to be employed, in the approaching tragedy. For some days before this, Mary's servants had suspected the worst; but the preparations which now took place, and the arrival of so many strangers, threw them into despair. On Tuesday, after dinner at two o'clock, the two earls demanded an audience of the Queen of Scots, who sent word that she was indisposed and in bed; but if the matter were of consequence, she would rise and receive them. On their reply that it could brook no delay, they were admitted

⁴ Davison's Defence; Nicolas's Life of Davison, p. 103; and *id.*, Appendix A.

⁵ La Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, in Jebb, vol. ii. p. 512.

after a short interval; and Kent and Shrewsbury coming into the apartment, with Paulet, Drury, and Beal, found her seated at the bottom of her bed, her usual place, with her small work-table before her.¹ Near her stood her physician Burgoine, and her women. When the earls uncovered, she received them with her usual tranquil grace; and Shrewsbury, in few words, informed her that his royal mistress, Elizabeth, being overcome by the importunity of her subjects, had given orders for her execution, for which she would now be pleased to hear the warrant. Beal then read the commission, to which she listened unmoved, and without interrupting him. On its conclusion she bowed her head, and, making the sign of the cross, thanked her gracious God that this welcome news had at last come; declaring how happy she should be to leave a world where she was of no use, and had suffered such continued affliction. She assured the lords that she regarded it as a signal happiness, that God had sent her death at this moment, after so many evils and sorrows endured for His Holy Catholic Church: "That Church," she continued, with great fervour of expression, "for which I have been ready, as I have often testified, to lay down my life, and to shed my blood drop by drop. Alas!" she continued, "I did not think myself worthy of so happy a death as this; but I acknowledge it as a sign of the love of God, and humbly receive it as an earnest of my reception into the number of His servants. Long have I doubted and speculated, for these eighteen or nineteen years, from day to day, upon all that was about to happen to me. Often have I thought on the manner in which the English have acted to imprisoned princes; and after my frequent escapes from such snares as have been laid for me, I have scarce ventured to hope for such a blessed end as this." She then spoke of her high rank, which had so little defended her from cruelty and injustice: born

a queen, the daughter of a king, the near relative of the Queen of England, the granddaughter of Henry the Seventh, once Queen of France, and still queen-dowager of that kingdom; and yet, what had all this availed her? She had loved England; she had desired its prosperity, as the next heir to that crown; and, as far as was permitted to a good Catholic, had laboured for its welfare. She had earnestly longed for the love and friendship of her good sister the queen; had often informed her of coming dangers; had cherished, as the dearest wish of her heart, that for once she should meet her in person, and speak with her in confidence; being well assured that, had this ever happened, there would have been an end of all jealousies and dissensions. But all had been refused her; her enemies, who still lived and acted for their own interests, had kept them asunder. She had been treated with ignominy and injustice; imprisoned, contrary to all faith and treaties; kept a captive for nineteen years; "and at last," said she, laying her hand upon the New Testament which was on her table, "condemned by a tribunal which had no power over me, for a crime of which I here solemnly declare I am innocent."² I have neither invented, nor consented to, nor pursued any conspiracy for the death of the Queen of England." The Earl of Kent here hastily interrupted her, declaring that the translation of the Scriptures on which she had sworn was false, and the Roman Catholic version, which invalidated her oath. "It is the translation in which I believe," answered Mary, "as the version of our holy Church. Does your lordship think my oath would be better if I swore on your translation, which I disbelieve?"

She then entreated to be allowed the services of her priest and almoner, who was in the castle, but had not been permitted to see her since her removal from Chartley. He would assist her, she said, in her preparations for death, and administer that spiritual

¹ La Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 612.

² La Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, p. 618.

consolation, which it would be sinful to receive from any one of a different faith. To the disgrace of the nobleman, the request was refused: nor was this to be attributed to any cruelty in Elizabeth, who had given no instructions upon the subject; but to the intolerant bigotry of the Earl of Kent, who, in a long theological discourse, attempted to convert her to his own opinions, offering her, in the place of her confessor, the services of the Protestant Dean of Peterborough, Dr Fletcher, whom they had brought with them. Mary expressed her astonishment at this last unexpected stroke of cruelty; but bore it meekly, as she had done all the rest, although she peremptorily declined all assistance from the dean. She then inquired what time she should die; and the earls having answered, "To-morrow at eight in the morning," made their obeisance, and left the room. On their departure she called her women, and bade them hasten supper, that she might have time to arrange her affairs. Nothing could be more natural, or rather playful, than her manner at this moment. "Come, come," said she, "Jane Kennedy, cease weeping, and be busy. Did I not warn you, my children, that it would come to this? and now, blessed be God! it has come; and fear and sorrow are at an end. Weep not, then, nor lament, but rejoice rather that you see your poor mistress so near the end of all her troubles. Dry your eyes, then, and let us pray together."

Her men-servants, who were in tears, then left the room, and Mary passed some time in devotion with her ladies: after which she occupied herself in counting the money which still remained in her cabinet; dividing it into separate sums, which she intended for her servants; and then putting each sum into a little purse with a slip of paper, on which she wrote, with her own hand, the name of the person for whom it was destined. Supper was next brought in, of which she partook sparingly, as was usual with her; conversing from time to time with Burgoine her physician, who

served her; and sometimes falling into a reverie, during which it was remarked that a sweet smile, as if she had heard some good news, would pass over her features, lighting them up with an expression of animated joy, which, much changed as she was by sorrow and ill health, recalled to her poor servants her days of beauty. It was with one of these looks that, turning to her physician, she said, "Did you remark, Burgoine, what that Earl of Kent said in his talk with me: that my life would have been the death, as my death would be the life of their religion? Oh, how glad am I at that speech! Here comes the truth at last, and I pray you remark it. They told me I was to die because I had plotted against the queen; but then arrives this Kent, whom they sent hither to convert me, and what says he? I am to die for my religion."¹

After supper, she called for her ladies, and asking for a cup of wine, drank to them all, begging them to pledge her; which they did on their knees, mingling their tears in the cup, and asking her forgiveness if they had ever offended her. This she readily gave them, bidding them farewell with much tenderness, entreating in her turn their pardon, and solemnly enjoining them to continue firm in their religion, and forget all their little jealousies, living in peace and love with each other. It would be easier to do so now, she added, since Nau, who had been so busy in creating dissensions, was no longer with them. This was the only subject on which she felt and expressed herself with something like keenness; repeating more than once, that he was the cause of her death, but adding that she forgave him. She next examined her wardrobe, and selected various dresses as presents to her servants, delivering them at the moment, with some kind expression to each. She then wrote to her almoner, lamenting that the cruelty of her enemies had refused her the consolation of his presence with

¹ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 534. Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 625.

her in her last moments, imploring him to watch and pray with her that night, and to send her his absolution.¹ After this she made her will; and lastly, wrote to the King of France. By this time it was two in the morning, and finding herself fatigued, she lay down, having first washed her feet, whilst her women watched and read at her bedside. They observed that, though quite still and tranquil, she was not asleep, her lips moving as if in engaged in secret prayer. It was her custom to have her women read to her at night a portion of the "Lives of the Saints," a book she loved much; and this last night she would not omit it, but made Jane Kennedy choose a portion for their usual devotions. She selected the life entitled "The Good Thief," which treats of that beautiful and affecting example of dying faith and Divine compassion. "Alas!" said Mary, "he was indeed a very great sinner, but not so great as I am. May my Saviour, in memory of His Passion, have mercy on me, as He had on him at the hour of death."² At this moment she recollects that she would require a handkerchief to bind her eyes at her execution; and bidding them bring her several, she selected one of the finest, which was embroidered with gold, laying it carefully aside. Early in the morning she rose, observing that now she had but two hours to live; and having finished her toilet, she came into her oratory, and kneeling with her women before the altar, where they usually said mass, continued long in prayer. Her physician then, afraid of her being exhausted, begged her to take a little bread and wine; which she did cheerfully, thanking him at the same time for giving her last meal.

A knock was now heard at the door, and a messenger came to say that the lords waited for her. She begged to be allowed a short time to conclude her devotions. Soon after, a second summons arriving, the door was open-

¹ The letters are preserved, and will be found printed in Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 627, 630.

² Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 631.

ed, and the sheriff alone, with his white wand, walked into the room, proceeded to the altar, where the queen still knelt, and informed her that all was ready. She then rose, saying simply, "Let us go;" and Burgoine her physician, who assisted her to rise from her knees, asking her at this moment whether she would not wish to take with her the little cross and ivory crucifix which lay on the altar, she said, "Oh yes, yes! it was my intention to have done so: many, many thanks for putting me in mind!" She then received it, kissed it, and desired Annibal, one of her suite, to carry it before her. The sheriff, walking first, now conducted her to the door of the apartment; on reaching which, her servants, who had followed her thus far, were informed that they must now turn back, as a command had been given that they should not accompany their mistress to the scaffold. This stern and unnecessary order was received by them with loud remonstrances and tears; but Mary only observed, that it was hard not to suffer her poor servants to be present at her death. She then took the crucifix in her hand, and bade them affectionately adieu; whilst they clung in tears to her robe, kissed her hand, and were with difficulty torn from her, and locked up in the apartment. The queen after this proceeded alone down the great staircase, at the foot of which she was received by the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent, who were struck with the perfect tranquillity and unaffected grace with which she met them. She was dressed in black satin, matronly, but richly, and with more studied care than she was commonly accustomed to bestow. She wore a long veil of white crape, and her usual high Italian ruff; an Agnus Dei was suspended by a pomander chain round her neck, and her beads of gold hung at her girdle.³ At the bottom of the staircase she found Sir Andrew Melvil, her old affectionate servant, and master of her household, waiting to take his last farewell. On seeing her he flung himself on his knees at

³ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XV.

her feet, and bitterly lamented it should have fallen on him to carry to Scotland the heart-rending news of his dear mistress's death. "Weep not, my good Melvil," said she, "but rather rejoice that an end has at last come to the sorrows of Mary Stuart. And carry this news with thee, that I die firm in my religion, true to Scotland, true to France. May God, who can alone judge the thoughts and actions of men, forgive those who have thirsted for my blood! He knows my heart; He knows my desire hath ever been, that Scotland and England should be united. Remember me to my son," she added. "Tell him I have done nothing that may prejudice his kingdom of Scotland. And now, good Melvil, my most faithful servant, once more I bid thee farewell." She then earnestly entreated that her women might still be permitted to be with her at her death; but the Earl of Kent peremptorily refused, alleging that they would only disturb everything by their lamentations, and be guilty of something scandalous and superstitious; probably dipping their handkerchiefs in her blood. "Alas, poor souls!" said Mary, "I will give my word and promise they will do none of these things. It would do them good to bid me farewell; and I hope your mistress, who is a maiden queen, hath not given you so strait a commission. She might grant me more than this, were I a far meaner person. And yet, my lords, you know I am cousin to your queen, descended from the blood of Henry the Seventh, a married Queen of France, and an anointed Queen of Scotland. Surely, surely they will not deny me this last little request: my poor girls wish only to see me die."¹ As she said this, a few tears were observed to fall, for the first time; and after some consultation, she was permitted to have two of her ladies and four of her gentlemen beside her. She then immediately chose Burgoine her physician, her almoner, surgeon, and apothecary, with Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth

Curle. Followed by them, and by Melvil bearing her train, she entered the great hall, and walked to the scaffold, which had been erected at its upper end. It was a raised platform, about two feet in height, and twelve broad, surrounded by a rail, and covered with black. Upon it were placed a low chair and cushion, two other seats, and the block. The queen regarded it without the least change of countenance, cheerfully mounted the steps, and sat down with the same easy grace and dignity with which she would have occupied her throne. On her right were seated the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, on her left stood the sheriffs, and before her the two executioners. The Earl of Kent, the Dean of Peterborough, Sir Amias Paulet, Sir Drew Drury, Beal the clerk of the privy-council, and others, stood beside the scaffold; and these, with the guards, officers, attendants, and some of the neighbouring gentry, who had been permitted to be present, made up an assembly of about two hundred in all. Beal then read the warrant for her death, which she heard with apparent attention; but those near her could see, by the sweet and absent expression of her countenance, that her thoughts were far off.

When it was finished, she crossed herself, and addressed a few words to the persons round the scaffold. She spoke of her rights as a sovereign princess, which had been invaded and trampled on, and of her long sorrows and imprisonment; but expressed the deepest thankfulness to God that, being now about to die for her religion, she was permitted, before this company, to testify that she died a Catholic, and innocent of having invented any plot, or consented to any practices against the queen's life. "I will here," said she, "in my last moments accuse no one; but when I am gone, much will be discovered that is now hid, and the objects of those who have procured my death be more clearly disclosed to the world."

Fletcher the Dean of Peterborough now came up upon the scaffold, and, with the Earls of Kent and Shrews-

¹ La Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 635, 636.

bury, made an ineffectual attempt to engage Mary in their devotions; but she repelled all their offers, at first mildly, and afterwards, when they insisted on her joining with them in prayer, in more peremptory terms. It was at this moment that Kent, in the excess of his Puritanism, observing her intensely regarding the crucifix, bade her renounce such antiquated superstitions. "Madam," said he, "that image of Christ serves to little purpose, if you have Him not engraved upon your heart." "Ah," said Mary, "there is nothing more becoming a dying Christian than to carry in his hands this remembrance of his redemption. How impossible is it to have such an object in our hands and keep the heart unmoved!"¹

The Dean of Peterborough then prayed in English, being joined by the noblemen and gentlemen who were present; whilst Mary, kneeling apart, repeated portions of the Penitential Psalms in Latin,² and afterwards continued her prayers aloud in English. By this time, the dean having concluded, there was a deep silence, so that every word was heard. Amid this stillness she recommended to God His afflicted Church, her son the King of Scotland, and Queen Elizabeth. She declared that her whole hope rested on her Saviour; and although she confessed that she was a great sinner, she humbly trusted that the blood of that immaculate Lamb, which had been shed for all sinners, would wash all her guilt away. She then invoked the blessed Virgin and all the saints, imploring them to grant her their prayers with God; and finally declared that she forgave all her enemies. It was impossible for any one to behold her at this moment without being deeply affected: on her

knees, her hands clasped together and raised to Heaven, an expression of adoration and divine serenity lighting up her features, and upon her lips the words of forgiveness to her persecutors. As she finished her devotions she kissed the crucifix, and making the sign of the cross, exclaimed, in a clear, sweet voice, "As Thine arms, O my God, were spread out upon the cross, so receive me within the arms of Thy mercy: extend Thy pity, and forgive my sins!"

She then cheerfully suffered herself to be undressed by her two women, Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, and gently admonished them not to distress her by their tears and lamentations; putting her finger on her lips, and bidding them remember that she had promised for them. On seeing the executioner come up to offer his assistance, she smiled, and playfully said, she had neither been used to such grooms of the chamber, nor to undress before so many people. When all was ready, she kissed her two women, and, giving them her last blessing, desired them to leave her, one of them having first bound her eyes with the handkerchief which she had chosen for the purpose. She then sat down, and, clasping her hands together, held her neck firm and erect, expecting that she was to be beheaded in the French fashion, with a sword, and in a sitting attitude. Those who were present, and knew nothing of this misconception, wondered at this; and in the pause, Mary, still waiting for the blow, repeated the psalm, "In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted: let me never be put to confusion."³ On being made aware of her mistake, she instantly knelt down, and, groping with her hands for the block, laid her neck upon it without the slightest mark of trembling or hesitation. Her last words were, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." At this moment the tears and emotions of the spectators had reached their height,

¹ *Martyre de Marie Stuart, Royne d'Escosse*, Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 47, 200, 307; and same volume, *Mort de la Royne d'Escosse*, p. 637.

² The Psalms, as numbered in the reformed version, were xxxii., li., and xcii. In the Vulgate, *Miserere mei Deus; In te, Domine, speravi; Qui habitat in adjutorio.—Mort de la Royne d'Escosse*, in Jebb, vol. ii. p. 638. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 248.

³ *In te, Domine, confido: non confundar in æternum.*

and appear, unfortunately, to have shaken the nerves and disturbed the aim of the executioner, so that his first blow was ill directed, and only wounded his victim. She lay, however, perfectly still, and the next stroke severed the head from the body. The executioner then held the head up and called aloud, "God save the queen!" "So let all Queen Elizabeth's enemies perish!" was the prayer of the Dean of Peterborough; but the spectators were dissolved in

tears, and one deep voice only answered, Amen. It came from the Earl of Kent.¹

An affecting incident now occurred. On removing the dead body, and the clothes and mantle which lay beside it, Mary's favourite little dog, which had followed its mistress to the scaffold unperceived, was found nestling under them. No entreaty could prevail on it to quit the spot; and it remained lying beside the corpse, and stained in the blood, till forcibly carried away by the attendants.²

Mary's death was a & was a forgery, but
she had desired her death privately in some
way so as to clear herself - the dared accuse
her of one - she raved at first but her hands
on trial of her previous action.

CHAPTER VI.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1586-7—1590.

See also Scotland, Elizabeth

THE conduct of Elizabeth on the death of the Queen of Scots was marked by much dissimulation and injustice. After having signed the warrant for her execution, commanded it to be carried to the Seals, and positively interdicted Davison, to whom she delivered it, from any further communication with her till it was obeyed, she suddenly turned fiercely round upon him and her council, and cast on them the whole guilt of Mary's blood. In a moment she denied, or pretended to forget, everything which she had done. She had declared to Sir Robert Melvil, that she would not spare his royal mistress's life for one hour; now she swore vehemently that she never intended to take it. She had assured Davison, with a great oath, that she meant the execution to go forward; now she loudly protested that she had commanded him to keep the warrant till he received further orders. She had laboured anxiously with Paulet to have Mary secretly made away with; and now she did not scruple to call God to witness, under awful otestations, that her de-

termined resolution had been all along to save her life.³ And her subsequent conduct was perfectly in character with all this. On the day after the execution, Lord Shrewsbury wrote from Fotheringay to the court, which was then at Greenwich. Next morning, at nine, his letters were brought to the palace by his son Henry Talbot, and the news became public. Soon after, the bells of the city, and the blazing of bonfires, proclaimed the happiness of the people.⁴ It was impossible that these demonstrations should have escaped the notice of Elizabeth; and we know from Davi-

¹ Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, p. 641. Martyre de Marie Stuart, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 308. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 535. Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 117.

² Mort de la Royne d'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 641. Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 117.

³ Supra, p. 149. Life of Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor, p. 119. Chasteauneuf to Henry III., 28th February 1587. Also MS. Minutes of Carey's Message, Warrender MSS.

⁴ Life of Egerton, pp. 117, 119. Letter of Chasteauneuf to Henry III., 28th February 1587. It ought to be remembered that Chasteauneuf uses the new style.

son, every word of whose "Apology" carries truth and conviction with it, that the queen that same night was made aware of Mary's execution;¹ but she took no notice, and kept an obstinate silence. Apparently none of her ministers dared to allude to the event; and when, after four days, the news was at last forced upon her, she broke into a hypocritical passion of astonishment, tears, and indignation. She upbraided her councillors with having purposely deceived her,² chased Burghley from her presence, and committed Secretary Davison to the Tower. It was in vain that this upright and able, but most unfortunate of men, pleaded, with all the energy of truth, the commands of his sovereign for everything that he had done. She knew he had no witnesses of their conversation; charged him with falsehood and disobedience; compelled Burghley, who must have been well assured of his innocence, to draw up a severe memorial against him; had him tried before the Star-chamber; degraded him from his office of secretary; inflicted on him a fine which amounted to absolute ruin; and never afterwards admitted him to the least enjoyment of her favour.³

All this was in keeping with the subtlety and disregard of truth which sometimes marked Elizabeth's proceedings, when she had any great object to gain. It was part of a pre-meditated plan by which she hoped to mislead Europe, and convince its states that she was really guiltless of Mary's blood: but ultimately it had no effect on the continent; and it was too palpably fictitious to be successful for a moment in Scotland, where the facts were well known. In that country, the news of Mary's execution was received with a universal burst of indignation, and open threats of revenge. But the English wardens, Lord Scrope and Sir John Foster, were provided

¹ Sir Harris Nicolas's Life of Davison, p. 268.

² Wright, Life and Times of Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 332. Wolley to Leicester, Sunday, 1586. This Sunday was the 12th February.

³ Nicolas's Life of Davison, pp. 82, 83; and Appendix, pp. 235, 236, 260, 263.

against immediate attack; and the season of the year, which was seed-time, rendered it difficult for the Scots to assemble in any force.⁴

It was Mr Roger Ashton, a gentleman of James's bed-chamber, whom he had sent to London some time before this, that brought the king the first certain intelligence of his mother's death. Ashton arrived in Edinburgh about the seventh day after the execution; and Lord Scrope, who had despatched a spy to watch James's motions, wrote in alarm to Walsingham, that the monarch was grievously offended, and had sworn that so foul an act of tyranny and injustice should not pass unrevenged.⁵ The feelings, however, of this prince were neither deep nor lasting. Even at this sad moment, selfishness and the assurance of undivided sovereignty neutralised his resentment; and he suffered some expressions of satisfaction to escape him, which his chief minister, Secretary Maitland, did not choose should reach any but the most confidential ears.⁶ Meantime, as Ashton's information was secret, James took no public notice of it, but sent in haste for Lord Maxwell, Kerr of Anerum, and young Fernyhirst.⁷ These were reckoned amongst his most warlike Border leaders; and whilst the country rang with threats of revenge, the king shut himself up in his palace, and held conference with them and his most confidential nobles.

Amid these consultations, Mr Robert Carey was despatched by the English queen to convey her apology to Scotland. This young courtier was the son of Lord Hunsdon, Elizabeth's cousin-german, and she selected him

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Foster to Walsingham, 26th February 1586-7. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Walsingham, 14th February 1586-7.

⁵ Lord Scrope to Walsingham. Queen Elizabeth and her Times, vol. ii. p. 333, 21st February 1586-7. Also State-paper Office, B.C., Sir H. Woddrington to Walsingham, 25th February 1586-7.

⁶ MS. Calderwood. British Museum, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 974.

⁷ Lord Scrope to Walsingham, 21st February 1586-7. Wright's Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 333.

as a personal favourite of the Scottish king. He carried with him a letter, written in her own hand, in which she expressed the excessive grief which overwhelmed her mind, in consequence of what she termed "the miserable accident which had befallen, far contrary to her meaning;"¹ and he was instructed to throw the entire blame of the tragedy at Fotheringay upon Davison and her council. On arriving at Berwick, Carey forwarded a letter requesting an audience; but this the king declined to grant till the envoy had stated, on his honour, whether his mother, the Queen of Scots, was dead or alive; and when it was answered that she was executed, James peremptorily refused to see the ambassador, and commanded him to proceed no further into Scotland. He added, however, that he would send some members of his council to Berwick, to whom the letter and message of the English queen might be delivered.

On any other occasion the wrath of Elizabeth would have blazed high and fierce at such an indignity; but at this moment she was placed in circumstances which compelled her to digest the affront; and Carey communicated her false and ungenerous version of the story of Mary's death to Sir Robert Melvil and the Laird of Cowdenknowes, who met him for this purpose at Berwick.² All this failed, as may readily be believed, to convince James, or appease the general indignation of the people. By this time, the execution of the Scottish queen, with its affecting details, was known throughout the country; and whatever may have been the king's secret resolutions upon the subject, he felt that it would be almost impossible to resist the deep and increasing current of popular fury which was sweeping on to its revenge.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 25th February 1586-7. Also, Warrender MSS., vol. A. p. 240.

² Warrender MSS., vol. A. p. 241. Mr Carey's Credit. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 10th March 1586-7.

Many symptoms daily occurred to shew this: already the Scottish Border chiefs had so strictly waylaid every road and pass, that not a letter or scrap of intelligence could be conveyed to the English court; three Scottish scouts, with troopers trained to the duty, and armed to the teeth, were stationed at Linton Bridge, Coldingham Moor, and beyond Haddington, who watched day and night, and pounced on every packet. The system of secret intelligence was at a stand; Walsingham pined for news, and complained that his "little blue-cap lads," who used to bring him word of all occurrences, were no more the men he had known them. Although the season of the year was unfavourable, the Borders were already stirring; some minor Scottish forays took place; and Bothwell, whose power was almost kingly on the marches, intimated unequivocally, that he only delayed his blow that it might fall the more heavily. He refused to put on mourning, striking his mailed glove on his breast, and declaring that the best "dule weed" for such a time, was a steel coat. Nor did he stand alone in these sentiments. Lord Claud Hamilton and his brother Arbroath offered, on the moment, to raise three thousand men, and carry fire and sword to the gates of Newcastle; whilst Buccleuch, Cessford, and Fernyhurst were only restrained from an outbreak by the positive injunctions of the king, and stood full armed and fiery-eyed, straining like blood-hounds in the slip, ready to be let loose on a moment's warning against England.

The first circumstance which offered any perceptible check to these dread appearances, was the arrival of an able letter addressed by Walsingham to Sir John Maitland of Thirlstane, the Scottish secretary of state, which was evidently meant for the king's eye. Thirlstane, originally bred to the law, was then high in his master's favour, and had risen by his talents as a statesman to be his most confidential minister. He was the son of Sir Richard Maitland, and younger brother

of the Secretary Lethington; and although his powers were less brilliant and commanding than those wielded by that extraordinary man, his good sense, indefatigable application to business, and personal intrepidity, made him a valuable servant to his sovereign, and a formidable antagonist to the higher nobility, who envied and disliked him. To him, therefore, Walsingham wisely addressed this letter, or rather memorial, in which he argued the question of peace or war, and pointed out the extreme folly and impolicy of those counsels which, at such a moment, urged the young king to a rupture with England. His reasons were well calculated to make an impression upon James.¹ Advertising to the injustice of the quarrel, he described, with great force of argument, the effects that a war with England must inevitably produce on his title to the succession after the queen's death, and the certain alienation of the whole body of the English nobility and people from a prince who first revived the ancient and almost forgotten enmity between the two nations, and then hoped to be welcomed as the successor of so great and popular a princess as Elizabeth. As for Spain and France, on whose assistance it was reported he chiefly depended, could he for a moment imagine that Spain would prove true to him? —a country which hated him for his religion; or France, whose policy was to counteract, by every possible method, an event which must be so fatal to her power, as the union, whether by conquest or otherwise, of the crowns of England and Scotland? Could he believe that the French monarch would assist him to a conquest which, if completed, must threaten his own crown? Had he forgotten that the monarchs of England still insisted on their right to the throne of France? Besides, could it be credited for an instant, that the king of that country would ever cordially unite his interests with a monarch so nearly allied as James to

the family of Guise; a house which Henry hated in his heart, and which he suspected to aim at his deposition?

There can be no doubt that these arguments of so far-sighted a statesman as Walsingham were not thrown away eventually upon James; but at the moment the impression was scarcely perceptible, and for some time everything portended war.

The Scottish Borders, which during the winter and spring had been kept in tolerable quietness, broke into open hostility as the summer advanced. Six successive Scottish forays swept with relentless havoc through the middle marches; and Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, who commanded in those parts, found himself too weak to restrain the incursions of the fierce marauders of Cessford, Fernyhirst, Bothwell, and Angus. In a piteous letter to Walsingham, he described the country as having been reduced to a desert, wasted with fire and sword, and filled with lamentation and dismay;² and he remonstrated with the Scottish wardens in strong terms. But so little impression did Collingwood's complaints make on the Scottish government, and so inadequate was the assistance sent him by his own, that Buccleuch, Cessford, and Johnston, with a force of two thousand men, attacked him in his castle at Eslington, slew seventeen of his garrison, took one of his sons prisoner, severely wounded another, and but for the fleetness of his horse, had made captive the warden himself.

It seems difficult to reconcile these flagrant outrages, which continued more or less throughout the year 1587, though unnoticed by our general historians, with James's warm coalition with Elizabeth in 1588. The probable explanation may be that the young King of Scots, without serious intentions of war, was not displeased that Elizabeth should have a little temporary experience of his power of

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Collingwood to Walsingham, July 12, 1587. Ibid., B.C., same to same, May 21, 1587. Ibid., B.C., same to same, with enclosure, June 23, 1587; and ibid., same to same, August 23, 1587.

² His letter, which is very long, is printed entire by Spottiswood, pp. 359-362.

disturbing her; that he was not annoyed by such excesses; and even, as Foster asserted and Burghley suspected, secretly encouraged them.¹ He knew that Elizabeth was anxious to conciliate him, and had determined, at all hazards, to purchase peace with Scotland; and he, on his side, had resolved that he would not sell it too cheap. He was well aware of the embarrassments with which the English queen was now surrounded. The mighty preparations of Spain against England were no secret; the rebellion of Tyrone in Ireland was at its height; in Scotland the Catholic lords, Huntly, Errol, Angus, Maxwell, and their adherents, were powerful, warlike, and stirring, animated with the bitterest animosity against Elizabeth, whom they detested as the murderer of their queen and the implacable enemy of their religion. Another thorn in the side of England was the constant friendly intercourse between the Irish insurgents and the Scottish Isles. From these nurseries of warlike seamen and soldiers, strong reinforcements had already joined Tyrone; and the chiefs, who were as fierce and potent as so many little sea kings, drove a lucrative trade by serving him against England at a high price. This was another weapon in the hand of James. By means of his lieutenants, Huntly and Argyle, to whom the administration of the northern parts of his dominions was intrusted, he could let loose the Islesmen against Elizabeth, or detain them at home, as suited his policy; and that queen repeatedly requested him to exert this influence in her favour. To do this, however, with greater profit to himself, the king was not unwilling she should feel his power; and, with this view, he shut his eyes to the Border inroads, delayed remonstrating with Huntly on his intrigues with Spain, refused to apprehend the Jesuits who were lurking in his dominions, and gave himself no trouble to check the rising animosity

against England. Yet in his heart he had no inclination for war. He felt the truth of Walsingham's argument, that any prolonged struggle at this moment with England w^ould be fatal to his hopes of succession; and he flattered himself that he had the reins over the Catholic lords and the Spanish intriguers so completely in his hands, that he could command peace with England at whatever moment the queen chose to have his amity on his own terms. In such a hope it turned out that he was deceived. The Catholic party, supported by the money of Spain, commanding nearly all the northern counties, and having with them the sympathies of the people, who were enraged at the execution of Mary, gained in a short time a strength on which he had not calculated, and far from being bridled, for some time dictated terms to him. But it is time to return from this digression to the course of events in Scotland.

The king, who was now on the eve of his majority, assembled a convention of his nobility at Edinburgh, and determined to despatch ambassadors to the courts of France and Denmark.² To Henry the Third he proposed a renewal of the ancient league between the two kingdoms; whilst to the Danish monarch he made overtures of a matrimonial alliance.³ But Henry, who was at this moment disposed to be on favourable terms with England, treated James's advances coldly; and although the Danish alliance eventually took place, its first suggestion does not appear to have been very cordially welcomed.⁴

The same convention was signalised by an event which brought a merited punishment on one of the basest of men. This was the fall of the Master of Gray, who was tried for high treason, condemned, and on the point of

² Moyse's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 64.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Carvyle to Walsingham, June 3, 1587.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, A B. to Walsingham, August 19, 1587. Also Car to Walsingham, B.C., State-paper Office, September 11, 1587. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 65.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Robert Carvyle to Walsingham, December 4, 1587. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Burghley to Fowler, April 17, 1588.

being executed, when his life was spared, and the sentence changed to banishment, at the intercession of the Earl of Huntly and Lord Hamilton. His accuser was Sir William Stewart, now about to proceed on the French embassy; and in his *dittay*, or indictment, which has been preserved, were contained various points of treason.¹ But his most flagrant offence, which was completely proved, was the base betrayal of his trust in his recent negotiation in England, where he secretly recommended the death, instead of pleading for the life, of the Scottish queen. At first, with his wonted effrontery, he attempted to brazen out the matter and overawe his enemies; but in the end he pleaded guilty; and, as abject as he had been insolent, threw himself on the king's mercy. None lamented his disgrace; for, although still young in years, Gray was old in falsehood and crime. Brilliant, fascinating, highly educated, and universally reputed the handsomest man of his time, he had used all these advantages for the most profligate ends; and his life, which to the surprise of many was now spared, had been little less than a tissue of treachery. He retired to France; and although, after some years, he was again permitted to return to Scotland, he never recovered the commanding station from which he fell.²

James had now attained majority, and important subjects began to occupy his mind. Amid much that was frivolous and volatile, this young prince sometimes evinced a sagacity in detecting abuses, and a vigour in devising plans for the amelioration of his kingdom, which surprised even those who knew him best. To reconcile his nobility, and extinguish those fierce and sanguinary family feuds which so frequently defied the laws and tore the kingdom in pieces; to arrange the affairs of the Kirk, pro-

vide for its ministers, and establish a certain form of ecclesiastical polity; to escape from the pressure of an enormous debt by recovering the crown lands, which had been greatly dilapidated during his minority; and to take some decisive steps on the subject of his marriage: these were the chief points which now pressed themselves upon his attention, and to which he directed the labours of his principal minister, the Secretary Maitland. But difficulties encountered him at every step. Outwardly, indeed, the king's desire for a reconciliation amongst the nobles was accomplished; and at the conclusion of the parliament held in the capital,³ the principal street exhibited a singular spectacle. A table was spread at the cross, where a banquet was prepared by the magistrates; and a long line of nobles, who had been previously reconciled and feasted by the king in the palace at Holyrood, was seen to emerge from its massive gateway, and walk in peaceful procession up the principal street of the city. Bothwell and Angus, Hume and Fleming, Glammis and Crawford, with many other fierce opponents who had been compelled by their sovereign's threats or entreaties to an unwilling embrace, marched hand in hand to take their seats at the board of concord, where they drank to each other amid the thunder of the castle guns, and the songs and shouts of the citizens. It was an imposing ceremony, but really an idle and hollow farce. The deep wounds of feudal hatred, and the sacred duty of feudal revenge, were not so easily cured or forgotten; and many of the hands now locked in each other were quivering with a desire to find occupation rather in grappling the throat than pledging the health of their brother. Before the year concluded, all accordingly was nearly as bad as before.

There was one point, however, on which all seemed agreed—a desire to attack England and avenge the death of Mary. So deep was this feeling, that Thirlstane, now raised to the high office of chancellor, in closing

¹ Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. i. part iii. p. 157. Historie of James the Sext, p. 227. Spottiswood, p. 363.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 29th April 1587. Ibid. Carvyle to Walsingham, May 12, 1587.

³ Historie of James the Sext, p. 229.

the parliament, made a stirring appeal to the assembled estates; and such was the impression of his eloquence, that the nobles, in a transport of pity and enthusiasm, threw themselves upon their knees before the king, and, amid the clang of their weapons and imprecations against Elizabeth, took a vow that they would hazard their lives and fortunes in the quarrel.¹

These indications encouraged Huntly and the potent faction of the Catholic lords to a renewal, or rather more active continuance, of their intrigues with Spain and the Low Countries. Messengers were despatched thither, (not without the connivance of James,) who held out hopes to Philip of Scottish assistance in his great enterprise against England.² Various Jesuits and seminary priests in disguise (of whom Gordon and Drury were the most active) glided through Northumberland into Scotland, proceeded to the late convention at Edinburgh, and from thence to Aberdeen, where they continued their efforts, in conjunction with their foreign brethren, for the re-establishment of the Catholic faith and the dethronement of Elizabeth.³ Apparently all this was encouraged by the Scottish king. It is, indeed, sometimes exceedingly difficult to get at the real sentiments of a prince who prided himself upon his dissimulation; but, either from policy or necessity, he was soon so utterly estranged from England, and so completely surrounded by the Spanish faction, that Elizabeth began to be in serious alarm.⁴

That great princess was at this moment surrounded by dangers of no ordinary magnitude. Philip the Second of Spain was collecting against her that mighty armament, which was idly deemed to be invincible. The ports

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Carlyle to Walsingham, August 3, 1587.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Carlyle to Walsingham, September 11, 1587. Also ibid., B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, April 29, 1587.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Collingwood to Walsingham, May 21, 1587.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, November 14, 1587.

of Spain and Flanders rang with the din of arms and the bustle and confusion of military preparation. The queen had been persuaded by Burghley and her chief councillors, that the execution of the Queen of Scots would prove a deathblow to the Catholic party, extricate her from all her difficulties, and confer upon her life and crown a security to which she had for many years been a stranger. But she was miserably disappointed. The accounts of the death of Mary were received by nearly the whole of Christendom with one loud burst of astonishment and indignation. No sovereign had enforced more rigidly than Elizabeth the dogma of the inviolability and divine right of princes, and their responsibility to God alone. The doctrine was generally received and acted upon by her royal allies; and they now arraigned her as an apostate from her own principles, and an open despiser of all that was holy, just, and true. Mary's servants and household were many of them foreigners; and, returning to their homes, spread over the continent the touching story of her death. The hypocritical pretences of the Queen of England, by which she had endeavoured to shield herself from the odium of the execution, were generally discredited. It was said that, for the gratification of her own private revenge, she had not scrupled to stain her hands with the blood of an innocent queen; and that, to escape the infamy of the fact, she had meanly and falsely thrown the blame upon an innocent councillor. The press seemed throughout Catholic Europe with innumerable publications: histories, poems, pamphlets, and funeral orations, were circulated in every quarter on the alleged martyrdom of the Scottish queen, and the execrable guilt of her by whom she had been murdered. The whole course of Elizabeth's public and private life was dissected, attacked, and exaggerated; and she was held up to the detestation of the world as the true daughter and inheretrix of all the wickedness, cruelty, irreligion, tyranny, and lust of her father, Henry the

Eighth. The effect of all this, and the impression it made upon the Catholic mind throughout Christendom, was great; and when Philip began his mighty preparations against England, the projected invasion of that country partook of something like the sanctity of a crusade.

Surrounded by such complicated difficulties, it was not without alarm that Elizabeth heard of the estrangement of the Scottish king, and the bold proceedings of her enemies the Catholic lords. Confident of the assistance of Spain, with whose vast preparations they were well acquainted, they hoped to revolutionise Scotland, get possession of the king's person, destroy his Protestant advisers, and re-establish the Catholic religion.¹ It was one principal branch of their plan to produce a diversion against England in Ireland and the Western Isles, which should take place at the moment of the invasion by the Armada. For the accomplishment of these great designs, Lord Maxwell, a leading and powerful Catholic lord, was on the continent in communication with Spain and Rome; Archibald Douglas was suspected to be seconding their efforts in England, and the disgraced Master of Gray in France; whilst Sir William Stewart, the brother of the once-powerful Arran, was busy at the head-quarters of the Prince of Parma.² In Scotland, Huntly, the great leader of the Catholic lords, with Lord Claud Hamilton, Mar, Angus, and Bothwell, were prepared, on the briefest warning, to assemble a force which the king, in his present circumstances of poverty and desertion, could not control. As was usual in Scotland, schemes of private assassination were mixed up with plots against the government: not only the Chancellor Maitland but the king himself considered their lives in danger;³

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, ff to Walsingham, 1st January 1587-8.

² MS., State-paper Office, January 1587-8. Occurrences out of Scotland.

³ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula D, fol. Hunsdon to Burghley, 25th November 1587. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., same to same, 14th December 1587; and ibid., same to same, 27th December 1587.

and James, in self-defence, was compelled to dissemble, and to aim at a neutrality which promised a temporary security.⁴ But throughout all this the real sentiments of the monarch experienced no alteration. He continued firm in his opposition to Spain, true to the Reformed religion, and ready to league with England the moment Elizabeth, throwing off her parsimony, shewed a sincere determination to assist him with money and troops. This the imminent dangers with which she was surrounded at length compelled her to do; and Lord Hunsdon, her cousin, who had recently gained an intimate knowledge of the intrigues of France by robbing the French ambassador, Courcelles, of his despatches, was selected to open a communication with the King of Scots. But at this moment a circumstance, apparently slight, had nearly overturned all. Jane Kennedy, the daughter of a noble house, who had attended Mary in her last hours, suddenly arrived from France, obtained a private audience of the king, was closeted with him for two hours, and gave so touching an account of the tragedy at Fotheringay, that James refused to be comforted; and denouncing vengeance, broke off the conferences with England. But these feelings were evanescent: the violence of the northern earls, the fear of losing Elizabeth and cutting himself out of the succession, restored him to his calmer mood; and he despatched the Laird of Carmichael to meet Hunsdon on the Borders at Hutton Hall.⁵ All, however, had to be transacted with the utmost secrecy; and nothing could be more alarming than the picture of the kingdom drawn by the English diplomatist. Huntly and the Catholics, he said, were almost in open rebellion, earnestly pressing Philip and the Duke of Parma to attack England through

⁴ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula D, fol. Hunsdon to Burghley, 25th November 1587. Also MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., same to same, 14th December 1587; and ibid., same to same, 27th December 1587.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Hunsdon to Burghley, 23d January 1587-8. Also ibid., same to same, 17th January 1587-8.

Scotland ; and offering, the moment the Spaniards made their descent, to join them with a body of troops which should overwhelm Elizabeth.¹ Against this there was little to oppose : for the Scottish king and the Kirk were on bad terms ; and the Chancellor Maitland, the only man of statesman-like views, although in heart a Protestant and a friend to England, lived in hourly dread of assassination by Bothwell or some of his desperate associates.² Under such trying circumstances, it says something for the King of Scots that he resisted the high offers made to him at this crisis by foreign princes, declared himself the determined opponent of Spain, resolved to support the reformed opinions, and co-operated cordially with the Queen of England. He assured Elizabeth that she could not detest more deeply than himself the plots of the Papists ; that none of the messengers of Antichrist, their common enemy, should be encouraged ; and that his single reason for suspending their usual loving intelligence, was a feeling that she had failed to vindicate herself from the guilt of his mother's blood. To prove his sincerity against the Catholies, he summoned his forces, attacked the castle of Lochmaben, belonging to Lord Maxwell, who had now assumed the title of Morton, and, reinforced by an English battering-train, destroyed the castle, and took prisoner its captain, David Maxwell, whom he hanged with six of his men.³ This spirit and severity enchanted Elizabeth ; and she forthwith despatched Mr William Ashby to the Scottish court with her thanks and congratulations. But the ambassador promised far more than the queen had the least intention of performing. His royal mistress, he said, was ready to settle a duchy on her good brother, with a yearly pension of

five thousand pounds. She would immediately raise for him a body-guard of fifty Scottish gentlemen ; and, to meet the danger of a revolt by the Popish lords on the approach of the Armada, she would levy a corps of a hundred horse and a hundred infantry to act upon the Borders.⁴ With these high offers James immediately closed ; and Walsingham, for whose piercing glance and universal intelligence nothing was too minute or remote, having discovered that Thomas Fowler, an attached friend of the house of Lennox, and a favourite of the Scottish king, was about to proceed on some private personal affairs to Edinburgh, contrived, through his means, to open a secret correspondence with James, and Maitland his chief minister, which enabled them to traverse and overthrow the designs of Huntly and the Spanish faction.⁵ All this was of the utmost importance to Elizabeth. Ireland was saved from any invasion by the Islesmen ; the Borders between England and Scotland were kept quiet ; no Scottish auxiliaries were permitted to pass over to the service of her enemies ; and she was enabled to concentrate her whole naval and military energies to meet the great crisis of her fate, the meditated invasion of the Armada. This she did, accordingly, in the noblest and most effective manner : and the result is familiar to all, in the utter discomfiture and dispersion of that mighty armament.

Not long after this occurred the assassination of the Duke of Guise and his brother the Cardinal of Lorraine, which removed two of her most powerful and talented opponents : so that, although the clouds still lowered, the imminency of the danger on the side of Spain and France had passed.

James now naturally looked for the performance of her promises ; but he was cruelly disappointed. With the cessation of alarm, Elizabeth's deep-

¹ MS., 1588-9, State-paper Office. Intercepted letters of Huntly, Morton, and Lord Claud Hamilton, in the name of the Catholic gentlemen of Scotland, to the King of Spain. This is a decipher by the noted Phelips.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Hunsdon to Burghley, 31st March 1588.

³ Historie of James the Sext, p. 236.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, William Ashby to Lord Burghley, 6th August 1588.

⁵ Ibid., Ashby to Walsingham, 13th November 1588. Also ibid., Fowler to Walsingham, 18th December 1588.

rooted habits of parsimony revived : the promised duchy with its princely revenue, the annual pension, the intended body-guard, the English auxiliaries to act upon the Borders, melted away and were no more heard of. Ashby, the ambassador, it was alleged, had much exceeded his instructions ; and the king, in great wrath, complained that he had been dandled and duped like a boy.¹ These irritated feelings were encouraged by the Spanish faction. Many urged the king to seek revenge. Bothwell, ever anxious for broils, boasted that, without charging his master a farthing, he would bleed Elizabeth's exchequer at the rate of two hundred thousand crowns a year, or lay the country waste to the gates of Newcastle. The more moderate party hardly dared to advise ; and the Chancellor Maitland, hitherto the firm friend of England, found himself compelled to unite with Huntly. The character of the young prince, and the dangerous and unsettled state of Scotland at this time, were strikingly described by Fowler in one of his letters to Walsingham. He found James, he said, a virtuous prince, stained by no vice, and singularly acute in the discussion of all matters of state, but indolent and careless ; and so utterly profuse, that he gave to every suitor, even to vain youths and proud fools, whatever they desired. He did not scruple to throw away, in this manner, even the lands of his crown ; and so reckless was he of wealth, that in Fowler's opinion, if he were to get a million from England, it would all go the same way. His pleasures were hunting, of which he was passionately fond ; and playing at the *mawe*, an English game of chance, in which he piqued himself on excelling. In his dress he was slovenly, and his court and household were shabby and unkingly ; but he sat often in council, was punctual in his religious duties, not missing the sermons thrice a week ; and his manners betrayed no haughtiness or pride. It

was evident to Fowler that he detested the rude and ferocious bearing of his great nobles, who were content to obey him in trifles, but in all serious matters, touching life or justice, took the law into their own hands, and openly defied him. Upon this subject Fowler's expressions were remarkable. When it came to the execution of justice, it was evident, he said, his subjects feared him not, whilst he was terrified to deal with so many at once, looking tremblingly to the fate of his ancestors, of whom such as attempted to execute justice with severity, were uniformly put to death by their nobles.² Often had the king assured the intimate friend who wrote these letters, that it was misery to be constrained to live amid the wickedness of his barons, and that they made his existence a burden to him. Nor could he look for redress to his council. Even the wisest and greatest amongst them, not excepting the Chancellor Maitland, were infinitely more occupied in private quarrels and family feuds than with the public business of the state ; and, to increase their individual power, were content to flatter the king in the basest manner, and become suitors at court for everything ungodly and unreasonable. Well might Walsingham exclaim, in answer to this sad, dark picture of regal weakness and feudal misrule, " God send that young prince, being of himself every way well-inclined, good, wise, and faithful counsellors, that may carry him in a constant course for the upholding of religion and the establishing of justice in that realm."³ As a cure for this miserable condition, the English secretary recommended a Court of Star-chamber, and a change of councillors from the great nobles to the barons and burgesses. But neither measure was practicable ; and Maitland, at this moment James's chief adviser,

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, 18th December 1588. Also ibid., Fowler to Walsingham, 29th December 1588.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, original draft; Walsingham to Fowler, 22d December 1588.

assured Fowler that the death of the Guises, instead of being attended with any favourable result in strengthening the English party in Scotland, would have an opposite effect. "Your queen," said he, "thinks that she has lost in Guise a great enemy, and my master a great friend. Be assured it is not so. For a long time the king hath had no dealings with the Guise : he loved him not ; nor is he sorry but rather glad that he is gone. But, mark me, this will make the King of Spain seek my master, and esteem him more than before : for by the Duke of Guise that prince thought to have had all France at his devotion, except the Protestants ; to have subdued even them ere long, and to have been so strong as to have had his revenge on England, without our help here ; but now Scotland is his only card to play against England, and that you will see ere long."¹

These predictions were soon fully verified. The Popish earls, led by Huntly and Errol, entered into a more active and deep-laid correspondence with Spain and Rome. Large sums of money were remitted to them from Philip and the Pope ; and letters were intercepted by Burghley, which proved, in the clearest manner, an intended rebellion. They were seized on the person of a Scotchman, who was detected carrying them to the Prince of Parma ; and expressed, on the part of Huntly, Morton, Errol, and the rest of the Catholic noblemen and gentry of Scotland, their infinite regret at the discomfiture of the Armada, and their sorrow that the fleet had passed so near their coast without visiting them, when they were able to have raised a force such as could not have been resisted. They assured the Spanish king, that the outlay of a single Galeas in Scotland would have gone further than ten on the broad seas ; and that six thousand Spaniards, once landed there, would be joined by an infinite multitude of Scotsmen animated with the bitterest

hatred to England, and who would serve him as faithfully as his own subjects. Huntly at the same time assured Parma, that his late confession, and his signature to the Protestant Articles, had been extorted from him against his conscience ; but that in spite of all this he continued a true Catholic, and by this pretended change had acquired a greater power over the young king. In the same letters Errol professed the utmost devotion to the Catholic faith, congratulating himself on having been called from darkness to light ; and Bruce informed Parma of the seasonable arrival of Chisholm, their agent, with the large sum intrusted to him, and of their having secured the Earl of Bothwell, who, though still a Protestant, had been bribed to embrace their party.

Copies of these letters were instantly sent down to James, who at first disbelieved the whole story, and dealt so leniently with the principal conspirators, that the plot, instead of being crushed in its first growth, spread its ramifications throughout the country, especially the northern counties, and grew more dangerous than before. Huntly was, indeed, imprisoned ; but his confinement was a mere farce. The king visited him in his chamber and dined there ; permitted his wife and servants to communicate freely with him ; wrote him an affectionate remonstrance, and even kissed and caressed him.² This could end only one way. The captive, after a brief imprisonment, during which he made the most solemn asseverations of his innocence, was restored by the too credulous monarch to his former authority, and basely abused the royal forgiveness by seducing the fierce and potent Earl of Bothwell from his allegiance, and breaking into open rebellion.

This insurrection at first assumed the most formidable appearance : the whole of Scotland north of Aberdeen was on the eve of revolt ; and Bothwell threatened, that if James ven-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, January 4, 1588-9.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Burghley, Edinburgh, March 10, 1588-9. Also ibid., same to same, March 14, 1588-9.

tured to take arms against the remoter insurgents, he would ravage the south in his absence and compel him to draw homewards. But this bravado, instead of intimidating, effectually roused the king, who, for the first and almost the last time in his life, exhibited a military spirit worthy of his ancestors. An army was instantly assembled; a conspiracy for the seizure of James and his chief minister, Maitland the chancellor, promptly discovered and defeated.¹ The Protestant nobles, led by the young Duke of Lennox and the chancellor, rallied in great strength; the Earl of Mar, the three lords warden, Hume, Cessford, and Carmichael, the Earls of Morton, Angus, Marshal, Athole, and the Master of Glammis, gathered and concentrated their forces beyond the Forth; and the monarch, who was described by Ashby the English ambassador, as "*fellow crabbed*," pushed on, at the head of his troops, to St Johnston, loudly declaring his resolution to wreck his rebels, and destroy them with fire and sword.²

This vigour and resolution had the best effect. The formidable stories of the mighty strength and preparations of the Catholic earls were found false and ridiculous,—their troops melted away. Bothwell's force, which was to effect such wonders, soon shrunk to thirty horse; and James, advancing by Dundee and Brechin, carried everything before him, and compelled the rebels to evacuate Aberdeen, the centre of their strength. It had been expected that the enemy would here give battle, but their courage failed them. Crawford secretly fled; others openly deserted; and the king, who had shewn unusual hardihood, and watched two nights in his arms, was disappointed of an opportunity to win his spurs. But the expedition was completely successful; Huntly was driven from Aberdeen to Strathbogie, his own country, where he surrendered himself prisoner, and was

carried in triumph by the king to Edinburgh. Slaines, the principal castle of Errol, was taken and garrisoned; the Lairds of Frendraught, Grant and Mackintosh, the powerful clans of the Drummonds and the Forbeses, with many others who had been seduced from their allegiance by the Catholic faction, submitted themselves; and James, in high spirits and exultation, returned to his capital with the resolution of proceeding instantly against Bothwell. But this fierce chief, who was now crest-fallen and in no state to make resistance, threw himself on his knees before the king in the chancellor's garden, and was sent prisoner to Holyrood.³

A convention of the nobility was now held at Edinburgh; and the rebel earls, Huntly and Crawford, having been brought to trial and convicted of high treason, escaped with imprisonment, contrary to the remonstrances of the leaders of the Kirk, who clamoured for the death of idolaters. Their confession, however, had softened the king; and their high connexions rendered it dangerous to use extremities. Bothwell also was brought to trial; but, after his usual fierce fashion, declared his innocence; reviled and accused the chancellor, and stood on his defence. The circumstance of his being in arms against the government, and his cordial co-operation with the northern rebellion, was, indeed, notorious to all; but the dread of his power and revenge intimidated the court. The trial was prolonged till midnight; and it required the presence and remonstrances of the king to procure a conviction. He was then shut up in Tantallon;⁴ but was enlarged, after a few months, on payment of a heavy fine to the crown.⁵

This unusual exertion of James in destroying the designs of Huntly and the Catholics, was followed by a fit

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, May 12, 1589.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, May 25, 1589. Ibid., Fowler to Walsingham, May 26, 1589.

³ Ibid., Ashby to Walsingham, August 26, 1589.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Burghley, April 8, 1589.

² Ibid., Fowler to Burghley, April 9, 1589.

of extraordinary activity on another subject : his marriage with Denmark. At the time of the first proposal of a matrimonial alliance with this kingdom, Arran was in power, and had engaged to Elizabeth that his royal master should continue single for three years. Accordingly, on the arrival of the Danish ambassadors, they found themselves treated with such irritating coldness and neglect, that it required much management on the part of Sir James Melvil to prevent an open rupture, and convince them that the affront proceeded not from the young king but his haughty minister.¹ His endeavours, however, succeeded ; and although the Danish monarch, in some disgust, disposed of his eldest daughter, the princess-royal, the intended bride of James, to the Duke of Brunswick, he afterwards declared his willingness to bestow her sister, the Princess Anne, upon the Scottish king. The intrigues of England, however, continued. Elizabeth, who had gained to her interest the Chancellor Maitland, recommended the Princess of Navarre ; and the celebrated poet Du Bartas visited Scotland on a secret mission to propose the match. This preference probably proceeded from a suspicion that the Princess Anne was not sound in her attachment to the Protestant opinions, which afterwards turned out to be well founded ; but James utterly disrelished the dictation of the queen and the boldness of his council. It was time, he felt, that in so weighty a matter as his marriage, he should vindicate his liberty of choice and follow his own judgment : he had, besides, heard a report that the Princess of Navarre was old and crooked ; and although his great nobles affected the alliance with France, the bulk of his people, the burgh towns and the merchants, were all keen for Denmark.² This decided the young king ; and he now despatched the earl marshal, with a noble suite,

to proceed to Copenhagen and conclude the match.

On his arrival, the Scottish ambassador found that, if cold or slow at first, the Danish court were hot enough (to use Ashby's expression to Walsingham) as soon as there was a serious proposal made. All was soon arranged, and the utmost bustle prevailed. In some amusing contemporary letters, the queen-mother is described as the soul and centre of the whole preparations—perpetually buying silks, or cheapening jewellery, or urging on a corps of five hundred tailors, who sat daily stitching and getting up the most princely apparel. Women, guards, pages, lackeys, all, from the highest to the lowest, who were to compose the suite of the bride, received orders to hold themselves in readiness. A fleet of twelve sail, with brass ordnance, was fitted out to transport her ; and it was reported that she was likely to land in Scotland before James's wedding hose were ready, or a house furnished to receive her.³ But these anticipations proved fallacious ; and the king, who had worked up his usually phlegmatic temper to an extraordinary pitch of chivalrous admiration, was kept for some weeks in an agony of suspense by contrary winds and contrary counsels. This did not prevent him, however, from forwarding to his ambassadors a gentle remonstrance touching the smallness of the "tocher," or dowry ; but Denmark refused to add a farthing to it ; and the monarch, affecting the utmost anxiety for the young princess, who, he had persuaded himself, was utterly in despair and love-sick at the delay, urged her instant departure.⁴ At length she sailed ; but the squadron encountered a tremendous storm, which shattered and dispersed the ships, and compelled them to return to Norway in so leaky and disabled a condition, that every hope of resuming their voyage for that season was aban-

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 337.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, 22d July 1589. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 363, 364.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, 22d July 1589. Fowler to Walsingham, 5th August 1589.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, August 5, 1589.

doned.⁵ During all this period of suspense, the young king's romantic agitation continued. He was a true lover, as Ashby described him to Walsingham in a letter from the court at Holyrood, thinking every day a year till he saw his love and joy approach; at one time, flying to God, and commanding prayers and fasting for her safe arrival; at another, falling upon the Scottish witches, to whose unhallowed rites and incantations he ascribed the tempests which delayed her. Nor were these pretended agonies: for when at last the news arrived of her danger and escape, he suddenly adopted the idea of proceeding in person to Norway, and determined (to use the poetic phraseology of Ashby to Queen Elizabeth) "to commit himself and his hopes, Leander like, to the waves of the ocean, all for his beloved Hero's sake."²

This resolution he carried into effect on the 22d of October; embarking at Leith, accompanied by the Chancellor Maitland, who had been forced to wave his repugnance to the match; by his favourite minister and chaplain Mr David Lindsay, and a select train of his nobility. On the day after his departure, a declaration of the reasons which had prompted so unusual a step was delivered to the privy-council, and afterwards made public. It was written wholly in the king's hand, and is ludicrously characteristic of the monarch. We learn from his own lips that it had been very generally asserted by his loving subjects, that their sovereign was a "barren stock," indisposed to marriage, and careless of having children to succeed him in the throne. His mind, too, had been attacked in most unmannerly terms: it was insinuated that the chancellor "led him by the nose," as if he were an unreasonable creature, a mere child in intellect and resolution, or an "impudent ass that could do nothing of himself." To confute the first slander,

he had determined to seek his queen forthwith, and marry her as speedily as the winds and waves would permit. To give the lie to the second aspersion, he assured his people, on the honour of a prince, that he alone, unknown to chancellor or council, had conceived the first idea of this winter voyage; that his resolution was taken in the solitude of his chamber at Craigmillar; and that, till the preparations were concluded, and he was ready to step on board, the purpose was shut up in his own bosom. "Let no man, therefore," he concluded, "grudge at this proceeding, but conform to the directions I have left."³

These directions, notwithstanding the undignified singularity of the paper which accompanied them, were marked by prudence and good sense. The chief authority, during the royal absence, was committed to the Duke of Lennox, who was made president of the privy-council. Bothwell, whose turbulent disposition and power upon the Borders rendered it dangerous for him to be disengaged, was conciliated by being placed next in rank and authority to Lennox. The other councillors were, the treasurer, comptroller, the lord privy-seal, the captain of the castle of Edinburgh, with the lord advocate and clerk-register. A committee of noblemen was ordered to attend "in their courses," at Edinburgh, for fifteen days; the Earls of Angus and Athole, with Lords Fleming and Innermeith, to begin; and the next course to be kept by the Earls of Mar and Morton, with Lords Seton and Yester. The chief military power, as lord-lieutenant, was intrusted to Lord Hamilton, to be assisted in any emergency by Lords Boyd, Herries, Maxwell, Home, Cessford, and other principal barons within the marches. All conventions of the nobles were prohibited during the king's absence; and the ministers and preachers enjoined to exhort the people to obedience, and to commend their sovereign and his journey in their prayers to God.⁴

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Walsingham, 5th, 24th September 1589. Also ibid., same to same, 2d October 1589. Ibid., same to same, 10th October 1589. Ibid., same to Queen Elizabeth, 23d October 1589.

² Spottiswood, pp. 377, 378.

³ Spottiswood, pp. 377-379.

⁴ Ibid., p. 379.

Having given these directions, the king set sail; and his insulated fit of love and chivalry met with its reward. After an initiatory gale, just sufficient to try the royal courage, the squadron reached Upsal on the fifth day, and James rode to the palace, where his intended bride awaited him; hurried, “booted and spurred,” into her presence; and, in the rude fashion of Scotland, would have kissed her, had he not been repulsed by the offended maidenhood of Denmark. But she was soon appeased: explanations followed; the manners of the royal bridegroom’s land were comprehended; and “after a few words privily spoken between his majesty and her, there passed,” we are told by a homely chronicler of the day, “familiarity and kisses.”¹

The marriage took place (November 23) in the church at Upsal: the ceremony being performed by the king’s favourite minister, Mr David Lindsay. Much rejoicing and banqueting, as usual, succeeded; and it appears to have required little argument in the queen-mother to persuade her new son-in-law to eschew the dangers of a winter voyage, and convert his intended visit of twenty days into a residence of nearly six months in Denmark. This interval was passed by the king to his entire satisfaction, the time being divided between in-door revelries and pageants; outdoor sports; discussions on astronomy with Tycho Brahe, whom he visited at Uranibourg; disputes with the learned Hemingius, on predestination and other points in divinity; and consultations with the Chancellor Maitland, regarding the safest method of curbing the overgrown power of his nobles, and vindicating, on his return, the authority of the crown. In the spring he determined on his voyage home; and carrying his youthful queen along with him, accompanied by a splendid retinue of Danish nobles and ladies,² arrived at Leith on the 1st of May 1590. The royal

pair were received, on disembarking, by the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, the Earl of Bothwell, and a crowd of his nobility. A Latin oration of welcome was followed by a sermon of Mr Patrick Galloway; and after divine service, the king, mounting his horse, followed by his youthful bride in her chariot, drawn by eight horses gorgeously caparisoned, proceeded to the palace of Holyrood. She was encircled by a galaxy of Danish and Scottish beauty, and attended by all the chivalry of her new dominions.

Her coronation followed not long after, performed on a scale of unusual magnificence, and only clouded by a dispute between the king and the Kirk, on the subject of anointing; a ceremony represented on the side of the Puritans as Jewish, Papal, and abominably superstitious: on the other, as Christian, holy, and Catholic. The royal arguments, however, were enforced by a threat that one of the bishops should be sent for. The dread of this worse profanation procured the admission of the lesser: the ceremony was allowed to proceed according to the king’s wishes; and, to use the *naïve* expression of a contemporary, “the Countess of Mar, having taken the queen’s right arm, and opened the *craigs* of her gown, Mr Robert Bruce immediately poured forth upon those parts of her breast and arm of quhilk the clothes were removed, a bonny quantity of oil.”³

The coronation was followed by the queen’s triumphal entry into her new capital; a ceremony conducted by the worthy merchants and burgesses on a scale of splendour which argued increasing wealth and success in commercial enterprise. But the particulars, though curiously illustrative of manners, would fatigue by their complexity. Latin addresses were, as usual in this age, the great staple of compliment; and when the Danish princess entered the gates, she was greeted in

¹ Moyse’s Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 81.
² Rymer’s Fœdera, vol. xvi. pp. 51-60.
³ The Coronation of the Queenis Majestie, p. 53. One of the curious tracts, reprinted by Mr Gibson-Craig in his interesting volume presented to the Bannatyne Club, entitled, “Papers Relative to the Marriage of James the Sixth of Scotland.”

a classical panegyric by “Master John Russell, appointed thereto by the township;” whilst the son of the orator, “little Master John Russell,” who had been artificially and wonder-

fully shut up in a gilded globe stuck upon the top of the gate, fluttered down in the dress of an angel, and delivered to her majesty the keys of the city in silver.²

CHAPTER VII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1590—1593.

THE period which James passed in Denmark was one of unusual and extraordinary tranquillity in Scotland. Previous to his departure, the king had exerted himself to conciliate Elizabeth; and many circumstances in his conduct had concurred to please this princess. His cordial co-operation against the Spanish king; the readiness with which he had furnished her with a body of auxiliaries, commanded by the Laird of Wemyss; his spirit and success in putting down the rebellion of the Catholic earls, and his sending out of his dominions a body of Spanish soldiers and mariners, whose vessels (part of the once formidable Armada) had been wrecked and stranded on the northern shores of Scotland:¹ all this had been exceedingly agreeable to the Queen of England; and she repaid it by preserving the most friendly relations during the absence of the king. Nor was the peace of the country, in this brief and happy interval, broken by the usual sanguinary baronial feuds; although, as the result fully shewed, they were silenced, not eradicated. Huntly, Errol, Crawford, Maxwell, and the great body of the Roman Catholic party, had too

recently experienced the weight of the royal vengeance to think of active hostility for some time; and the judicious division of power between the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, and the Earl of Bothwell, balanced by the authority committed to Angus and Athole, Mar and Morton, with other great barons, produced the best effects, and put all upon their honour and good conduct. The Kirk, too, was in a state of tranquillity—rejoicing in the recent detection and discomfiture of Roman Catholic intrigue, looking forward in calm exultation to the utter extirpation of prelatical principles, and anticipating no distant triumph to what it believed to be the truth.

On the return of the king, therefore, all at first appeared tranquil; but it needed no deep discernment to detect the existence of many latent causes of disturbance. The great struggle between the principles of the Reformation and the ancient faith was lulled only, not concluded.³ The minor, but sometimes not less bitter contest between Prelacy and Presbyterianism, was merely suspended for a time. Amongst the nobles, the right of private war; the ties of manrent;

² Papers Relative to the Marriage of James the Sixth, pp. 39, 40.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, 16th May 1590. The Roman Catholic faction were called the “Confederates of the Brig of Dee.”

¹ “To the number of 660 men, of whom 400 were serviceable, and the rest sick, miserable wretches.”—They were shipped from Leith, July 25, 1589. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Ashby to Burghley, 28th July 1589. Also ibid., same to Walsingham, 22d July 1589.

the abuses of baronial jurisdictions; the existence of blood-feuds, which often from trifling quarrels depopulated whole districts and counties; and in the isles, and remoter provinces of the north, the lawless and fierce habits of the petty chieftains and pirate adventurers, who assumed the state and independence of sea kings: all these circumstances combined to threaten the public tranquillity, and to convince the king that the sky so clear on his arrival might soon be black with its wonted tempests.

Amid these elements of political strife and nascent revolution, two men were to be seen evidently destined, from their power and political position, to take the chief lead in state affairs. Both were well aware of the easy and indolent temper of the king; both had resolved to engross to themselves the supreme power in the government: and for some years, the history of the country is little else than the conflicts of their intrigue and ambition. These were, Maitland of Thirlstane the chancellor, James's favourite and prime minister, who had accompanied his royal master to Denmark; and Francis Stewart, earl of Bothwell, the king's near relative, and, perhaps, the most daring, powerful, and unprincipled of all the higher nobles. Maitland, born of an ancient family, but only the second son of a simple knight, (the blind poet, Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington,) belonged to the body of the lesser barons; but he was connected with some of the greatest houses in the land. He had risen by his commanding talents to the highest legal office in the kingdom; and he was strong in the friendship of his prince, and the respect of the Kirk and the great body of the middle classes—the rich burghers, merchants, and artisans. During his absence in Denmark with his royal master, they had held many grave consultations on the broken, disjointed, and miserable state of his kingdom. The extreme poverty of the crown, the insolence and intolerable oppressions of the higher barons, who, strong in their hereditary power,

dictated to the monarch on all the affairs of his government, thrust themselves uncalled for into his councils, attended or absented themselves from court at their pleasure, and derided alike the command of their prince or the decisions of the laws: all this was pointed out by the chancellor to the king, and the absolute necessity of some speedy and efficient reformation insisted on. It was time, he said, that the monarch, who was now in the prime of his years and vigour, allied by marriage to a powerful prince, the heir of a mighty kingdom, and able, from his position, to take a leading part in European politics, should no longer be bearded by every baron who chose to consider himself as a born councillor of the realm. It was time that those illegal coalitions of the nobles, whose object it had so often been to seize the king's person, and compel him into an approval of all their atrocious designs, should be broken up, and for the future rendered impossible. To effect this, the crown must strengthen itself in every possible way: it must support its judges and officers in the execution of their duty against baronial oppression and insolence; it must increase its revenues by a prudent economy and retrenchment of the superfluous offices in the royal household; it must save its escheats, its wardships, its fines, its rentals, and all the sources of its wealth, to form a fund for all emergencies, but especially for the support of a body of waged troops, who, by their constant readiness for service and superior discipline, might overawe the nobles and their vassals. To effect this would require some sacrifices on the part of the prince. Amongst these, a more rigid and practical attention to business, a correction of the mischievous habit of granting every petition without inquiry, and a resolution to hold himself more distant and dignified to his nobility, were absolutely necessary; but if ready to consent to these, it would not, he said, be difficult to effect a thorough reformation; and he, the chancellor, for his part, was ready to back the king

to the utmost of his power to accomplish it. To this end, he represented to James the wisdom of keeping up the present friendly relations with England, and the necessity of watching the motions of Huntly and the Roman Catholic party, who, though apparently subdued and silent, were still powerful in the kingdom, busy in their intrigues with Spain, and ready to seize any opportunity for a new effort.¹ Nor was there any reason why this large and powerful body of men should despair of success, but rather the contrary. Ample proof of this may be found in a remarkable paper in the hand of Lord Burghley, written shortly before James's arrival from Denmark, and drawn up apparently for his own guidance, which brings forward, in clear contrast, the comparative strength of the Catholic and Protestant parties in Scotland. From it we learn, that all the northern part of the kingdom, including the counties of Inverness, Caithness, Sutherland, and Aberdeen, with Moray, and the sheriffdoms of Buchan, of Angus, of Wigton, and of Nithsdale, were either wholly, or for the greater part, in the interest of the Roman Catholic party, commanded mostly by noblemen who secretly adhered to that faith, and directed in their movements by Jesuits and priests, who were concealed in various parts of the country, especially in Angus. On the other hand, the counties of Perth and Stirling, the populous shire of Fife, and the counties of Lanark, Dumbarton, and Renfrew, including the rich district of Clydesdale, were, with few exceptions, Protestant; whilst the counties of Ayr and Linlithgow were dubious, and could not be truly ranged either on one side or the other.² Are we to be surprised that, in a country thus divided, and with a prince so little able to adopt a firm and determined line of policy as James then was, the struggle between the two parties should long be kept up with in-

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Lord Burghley, May 16, 1590.

² MS., State-paper Office. Names of the towns and noblemen in Scotland, and how they are affected. 1590.

creasing obstinacy and asperity? But it is necessary to leave these general remarks and resume our narrative.

In the end of May, the Danish commissioners and nobles, who had accompanied their young princess to Scotland, took leave of the Scottish monarch, and returned to Denmark. It had been arranged between James and his chief minister, Maitland, that no attempt at reformation should be made till these strangers had left the country; but scarcely had they embarked, when the king exhibited an unusual courage and activity, by making an effort to seize, with his own hand, the Laird of Niddry, a baron who had been guilty of a foul murder, and was protected by Bothwell. This energy, although unsuccessful at the moment, (for the culprit, receiving warning, escaped,) had a good effect in convincing the country that he was in earnest; and about the same time the strictest regulations as to audience were enforced at the palace. Of this an instance occurred soon after, which made some noise. Lord Hamilton, the first nobleman in the country, and heir-apparent to the throne, sought, as usual, to enter the king's presence-chamber, but was stopped at the door by Sandilands, one of the royal suite, who told him the king was quiet, and would see no one. "I was sent for," said Hamilton; "I am ready to serve my prince, and thought to have access freely as I was wont; but you may tell the king, that this new order will offend more than me." He then left the palace in a high fume, and would have ridden home had he not been better advised. James afterwards good humouredly appeased him; observing, that it ill became the heir-apparent to be angry with the *old laird*, meaning himself. Bowes however, who was at court, and told the anecdote to Burghley, observed, that such new restrictions gave deep offence in Scotland, and caused much murmuring with a proud nobility, long accustomed to have the freest access to their sovereign.³

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 23, 1590, Bowes to Burghley.

Such discontent, however small in its beginning, soon spread widely; and unknown evils and reforms being generally magnified in anticipation, the king's intentions created an alarm, which shewed itself in a coalition between those who hitherto had been in constant and bitter collision—the Catholic faction, known by the name of the Confederates of the Brig of Dee, and the Protestant associates of the Enterprise at Stirling. The Earls of Huntly, Errol, Bothwell, and Montrose, began to league together; and James had at first resolved to attempt a stroke of state policy by committing them to ward, bringing them to trial for their former offences, and at once destroying so dangerous a combination. But the attempt was deemed too hazardous; and it was judged more prudent to temporise, and keep up the two factions, balancing the one against the other.¹

A convention of the nobles was appointed to be held early in June, "The king," said Bowes to Burghley, alluding to his projected improvements, "according to his public promise in Edinburgh, and solemn protestations to some noblemen, ministers, and well-affected, is resolved to reform his house, council, and sessions, and to banish all Jesuits and Papists. He purposeth, further, to resume into his hands sundry of his own possessions now in the holding of others; to advance his revenues with some portions of ecclesiastical livings; and to draw to due obedience all persons attainted at horn, excommunicated, or otherwise disobedient. In the execution of which things," continued the ambassador, "he will find no little difficulty; for I have heard that many intend to seek to defeat and stay the king's course herein; and that sundry of the sessions will stand in law to hold their places, notwithstanding any charge to be given to avoid them."²

James, for some time, was active and serious in these reforms. His

household was greatly reduced in its expenditure. After a general dismissal of officers, which occasioned many murmurs, the gentlemen personally attendant on royalty were cut down from thirty to four, with two pages; and the monarch drew up, in his own hand, some principal matters relative to domestic and foreign policy, upon which he required the immediate advice of his privy-council. They must consider, he said, the state of the strengths and munitions, and the necessary provision to be made for the defence of the kingdom, in case of foreign invasion; the treaties required to be entered into, for the preservation of foreign amity; the best measures to be adopted for the procuring secret foreign intelligence; the "grieves of the nobility and people, as well against the king as the government of his councillors; the necessity of a rigid investigation into the true state of the realm;" the "ettling"³ and disposition of the nobility, and other persons of power and credit. They must discover who were well affected to the true religion; who carried away by the persuasion of Jesuits and Papists; what was the best medicine to cure diversities in religion, and heal the bloody wounds occasioned by feuds and family quarrels; what were the true causes of the decay of the rents of the crown; and lastly, they must point out the best method to enforce obedience to the acts of the last parliament, and declare what properly belonged to every office of the estate. Such were the grave and weighty matters which the king now brought before his council.⁴

But these were not all: the monarch had resolved to exert his utmost efforts to heal the wounds, not of Scotland only, but of Europe, by establishing a peace between England and Spain. To effect this, he despatched Colonel Stewart and Sir John Skene on a mission to the princes of Germany, to

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 23, 1590, Bowes to Burghley.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 31, 1590, Bowes to Burghley.

³ The etting, the aim; to ettle, to aim
The aim and leading objects of the nobles.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Heads for our
Privy-Council, May 1590. Set down by the
King of Scots.

persuade the Palsgrave, the Duke of Saxony, the Marquis of Brandenburg, and the rest of these potentates, of the absolute necessity of interfering between these two mighty powers; and to recommend them to send ambassadors to England, France, and Spain, who might remonstrate on the miserable consequences of the continuance of the war. If Spain were obstinate, a general league was to be concluded amongst the princes, for the preservation of "the common cause of true religion; and their ports were to be shut against Philip till he was reduced to reason."¹

These great designs the king communicated to Elizabeth by Sir John Carmichael, whom he sent to the English court with a copy of the Instructions furnished to his German ambassadors; and as his exchequer was at this time utterly impoverished, he requested that princess to lend him sufficient to defray the expenses of their voyage; declaring his readiness, in return, to place upon his privy-council any nobleman whom she recommended, and to exert his utmost strength in crushing the Roman Catholic faction, who were renewing their intrigues with Spain.² The "band," or covenant, which united Huntly, Errol, and their associates, in their recent treasonable enterprise, had been traced to the hands of the Laird of Auchendown, and Maitland the chancellor insisted on its being produced; assuring Elizabeth, with whom he was then in great favour, that the association should be broken up or Huntly wrecked for ever.³

To confirm the monarch in such

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, June 4, 1590.

² Ibid., June 9, 1590.

³ Ibid., June 4, 1590. It was about this time that Bowes placed in James's hands a letter writ by her majesty's own hand. It alluded to his great design for the re-establishment of peace, and was more free from the involution and pedantry which mark her private letters than many of her epistles. It assured him that she was happy to find him so grateful a king; that she highly approved of his purpose; and that nothing could equal the careful thoughts for him and his realm which had occupied her since his peregrination. "And so," said she, "I leave scrib-

good purposes, the Queen of England sent him the Garter by the Earl of Worcester, who arrived in Edinburgh during the sitting of that convention from which such important reformati ons were to have proceeded. James accepted the queen's presents and letter in excellent part; congratulated himself on having so worthy a knight-companion as the French king (Henry had just been chosen a knight of the order;) and held some merry talk with Worcester on the cause of the Scottish queen's invisibility, her majesty being then in the family way, and pretending it was only the tooth-ache.⁴ But, on proceeding from these lighter subjects to speak of the intended reformati ons, it was evident, even to the superficial observation of a stranger like Worcester, that the course of improvements would be beset with difficulties. When reformation of justice was debated, the Lords of Session professed, indeed, the utmost readiness to amend all; and two of their number, Mr David Makgill and Mr John Graham, indulged very freely and bitterly in mutual accusations of bribery and corruption; but the rest pleaded their privilege, granted by act of parliament, to "try themselves." With regard to the Kirk, when its leaders insisted that every parish should be provided with a minister, and every minister with a stipend, no objection was made by the nobles to the proposal, in general; but "the possessors of the church lands declared their determination not to surrender any portion of their tacks and leases unless the remainder should be secured to them in fee-simple for ever."⁵

In the end, however, some points were gained, which pleased both James and the English queen, who now acted

bling, but never end to love you and assist you with my friendship, care, and prayer to the living God to send you all prosperous success, and His Holy Spirit for guide."*

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Worcester to Burghley, Edinburgh, June 15, 1590.

⁵ Ibid.

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Royal letters, Scotland. Elizabeth to James.

together with much cordiality. The choice of the king's secret council was left to his own will, and Elizabeth knew she would be chiefly consulted. The monarch, strengthened by the approval of the wisest sort, led by the chancellor, held the Roman Catholic faction in awe; restrained the insolence of Bothwell; insisted on the appearance and delivery of all "at the horn" who had hitherto defied the law; took steps for the speedy and amicable settlement of all Border causes; adopted measures to amend the coin, which had been much debased; and, whilst he continued his favour towards the Kirk, did not scruple to silence some of the wilder sort of the brethren, who in their public sermons had attacked the Queen of England for her recent severity to the English Puritans. On this last subject, the excesses of the Puritans, Elizabeth felt keenly; and her farsighted glance had already detected the dangers of a sect then only in their infancy, but professing principles which she deemed inconsistent with the safety of any well-governed state. Worcester had received pointed instructions in the matter;¹ and the queen herself, when she dismissed Sir John Carmichael the Scottish ambassador, enforced her wishes in a private letter to James, which is too characteristic to be omitted. It is as follows:—"Greater promises, more affection, and grants of more acknowledgments of received good turns, my dear brother, none can better remember than this gentleman, by your charge, hath made me understand; whereby I think all my endeavours well recompensed, that see them so well acknowledged; and do trust that my counsels, if they so much content you, will serve for memorials to turn your actions to serve the turn of your safe government, and make the lookers-on honour your worth, and reverence such a ruler.

"And lest fair semblances, that easily may beguile, do not breed your igno-

¹ MS., State-paper Office, 1590. Memorial of sundry things moved to the King of Scots by the ambassador of England.

rance of such persons as either pretend religion or dissemble devotion, let me warn you that there is risen, both in your realm and mine, a sect of perilous consequence, such as would have no kings, but a presbytery; and take our place, while they enjoy our privilege, with a shade of God's Word, which none is judged to follow right, without by their censure they be so deemed. Yea, look we well unto them. When they have made in our people's hearts a doubt of our religion—and that we err, if they say so—what perilous issue this may make I rather think than mind to write. *Sapienti pauca.* I pray you stop the mouths, or make shorter the tongues of such ministers as dare presume to make *oraisons* in their pulpits for the persecuted in England for the gospel. Suppose you, my dear brother, that I can tolerate such scandals of my sincere government? No: I hope, however you be pleased to bear with their audacity towards yourself, yet you will not suffer a strange king receive that indignity at such caterpillars' hands, that instead of fruit I am afraid will stuff your realm with venom: of this I have particularised more to this bearer, together with other answers to his charge; beseeching you to hear them, and not to give more harbour to vagabond traitors and seditious inventors, but to return them to me, or banish them your land. And thus, with my many thanks for your honourable entertainment of my ambassador, [she means here the Earl of Worcester,] I commit you to God; who ever preserve you from all evil counsels, and send you grace to follow the best!"² To these wishes of Elizabeth both James and his prime minister, the Chancellor Maitland, responded with the utmost readiness. Indeed, the queen could scarcely resent the excesses of the Puritan clergy more violently than her brother-prince; although, from their influence over the people, he was compelled some-

² MS., State-paper Office. Royal letters. Copy of the time, endorsed 6th July 1590. Copy of her Majestie's letter written to the King of Scots, with her own hand, and sent by Sir John Carmichael.

times to temporise. The ministers, accordingly, were commanded to forbear prayer in their sermons for the persecuted in England ;¹ and equal activity was shewn against the intrigues of the Spaniards and the Catholic faction. When O'Rourke, an Irish chieftain, was detected in Glasgow, secretly beating up for recruits against the English, the King of Scots scrupled not to have him seized and delivered to Elizabeth. "I would to God," said he, writing to the queen, "your greatest enemies were in my hands; if it were the King of Spain himself, he should not be long undelivered to you: for that course have I taken me to, and will profess it till I die, that all your foes shall be common enemies to us both, in spite of the Pope, the King of Spain, and all the leaguers, my cousins not excepted, and the devil their master."²

In return for this devotion to her wishes, Elizabeth, forgetting her economy, transmitted, at various intervals, large sums to the king, complimented the young queen with presents, and flattered her by letters; whilst the chancellor, who had now consolidated his power, and could bid defiance to his opponents, entered into a cordial correspondence with Burghley. He reminded him of the "old familiar acquaintance and strict amity" which had subsisted between him and his late brother, the well-known Lethington; and declared his readiness and anxiety to shew himself worthy of the lord treasurer's friendly dealing and gentle messages sent recently by Carmichael. Speaking modestly of his own inferiority, he yet hoped that their mutual exertions would be followed by the best effects. "If," said he, "this microcosme of Britain, separate from the continent world, naturally joined in situation and language, and, most happily, by religion, shall be, by the indissoluble amity of the two princes, sincerely conserved in

union, the antichristian confederates shall never be able to effect their bloody and godless measures." In conclusion, he promised, that whilst Burghley, by his large experience and wisdom, held the Roman Catholic party in check, to "the benefit of all sincerely professing Christ in Europe" he would himself keep a watchful eye over their proceedings in Scotland; and so rigidly did he fulfil this, that, before the end of the year, watchfulness was turned into persecution, and the Catholics in vain petitioned for liberty of conscience, and pleaded the cruelty of being compelled to subscribe the Protestant Articles of religion.⁴ Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that their intrigues with Spain and the continent should have continued; and that, although Bowes, the ambassador, informed Burghley that the state of Scotland had been brought to great quietness, it was that deceitful calm which not unfrequently precedes the tempest.⁵

For a while, however, all went on smoothly; and the king found leisure to become exceedingly active and agitated upon a subject which forms a melancholy and mysterious chapter in the history of the human mind—that of witchcraft. That many unfortunate and miserable beings, driven by poverty and want, by suspicion and persecution, by the desire of vengeance, the love of power, or a daring curiosity after forbidden knowledge, had renounced their baptismal vows, and entered, as they believed, into a compact with the author of all evil, cannot be doubted. The difficulty is to discover whether they were the victims of their own imagination, the dupes of impostors, or, which is not to be rejected as impossible or incredible, the subjects and recipients of diabolic influence and agency. During the summer of this year, the young Laird of Wardhouse had been seized

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 14th August 1590.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Royal letters. Endorsed. The King of Scots' letter to the Queen's Majesty, by Roger Ashton, 22d March 1590-1.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Thirlstane to the Lord High Treasurer, 13th August 1590.

⁴ Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 7th November 1590.

⁵ MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley.

with a mortal sickness which had carried him to the grave; and it was discovered that several witches had formed his image in wax, which having "roasted at a slow fire, the gentleman," it was said, "pined away insensibly, but surely, till he died."¹ This was alarming enough; but in the winter still darker deeds came to light, involving higher culprits and more daring transactions. Agnes Sampson, a woman, as Spottiswood says, "not of the base or ignorant sort of witches, but matron-like, grave, and settled in her answers," accused Bothwell of consulting her as to the probable continuance of the king's life; and Richard Graham, a notorious sorcerer, averred that the earl had sought him on the same errand. Agnes declared, when questioned by the judges, that "she had a familiar spirit," who, upon her call, appeared in a visible form, and resolved her of any doubtful matters, especially concerning life and death. The mode in which she summoned him was by calling out, "Holla, Master!" an invocation which he had taught her himself. She added, that he had undertaken to make away with the king, but had failed; pronouncing him (when challenged by her for his want of success) to be invulnerable to his incantations, and muttering, in a language which she did not understand, but which turned out to be respectable French, "*Il est homme de Dieu.*"² Of James's labours with this miserable woman, who was condemned and burnt, Bowes wrote to Burghley. The king, he said, by his own especial travel, had drawn Sampson, the great witch, to confess plainly her wicked estate and doings, and to discover sundry things touching his own life: how the witches sought to have had his shirt, or other linen about him, for the execution of their charms. In these doings the Lord Claud's name was implicated, and sundry other noble personages evil spoken of. The number of the witches known, were (he added) about thirty; but many others

were accused of acts filthy, lewd, and fantastical.³ On a future occasion, the royal curiosity and acuteness were rewarded by the discovery of more particulars involving the guilt of Bothwell. They came out in an examination to which James subjected the wizard Richard Graham, who, upon some hope held out of pardon, confessed that Bothwell sought to draw him to devise some means to hasten the king's death, alleging that he was driven to this to avoid his own; since a necromancer in Italy had predicted to him that he should become great in power and temporal possession, kill two men, fall into trouble with the king for two capital crimes, be pardoned for the first and suffer for the second. The three first events; he averred, had taken place as foretold him: he had become a mighty baron, had killed Sir William Stewart, and *Davie the Devil*, meaning David Hume of Manderston; been once pardoned; and now he or the king must go. Graham agreed to assist him; and James had the satisfaction of hearing some particulars of the incantation. An image of the royal person was formed of wax, and hung up between a *tod*, or fox, over which some spells had been muttered, and the head of a young calf, newly killed. It was added, that all this was well known to Jely Duncan, who is described by Bowes as a kind of whipper-in to the witches, being accustomed to scour the country and collect together all the Satanic fraternity and sisterhood. But although she admitted, at first, their dealings with Bothwell, she afterwards denied all; and as these unfortunate wretches were so severely tortured that one of them died under the rack, it is impossible to receive their evidence without the utmost suspicion.⁴ Bothwell, however, amid loud asseverations of innocence, was seized and sent to prison, and an early convention of the estates called for his trial. But the evidence, by the king's own admission, was slender; the nobles seemed

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 23d July 1590.

² Spottiswood, p. 383.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 7, 1590.

⁴ Ibid., 15th April 1591.

unwilling to countenance any violent proceedings against him ; and the matter was so long delayed, that his fierce temper would endure confinement no longer ; and breaking his prison, he buried himself amongst his friends and fastnesses in the Borders.¹

This result greatly irritated the king, who consoled himself by bringing to trial one of the leading witches, named Barbara Napier, a woman well connected, and of whose conviction he entertained no doubt. To his astonishment, the jury did not conceive the evidence sufficient, and acquitted her. The verdict threw James into the greatest rage ; yet it was difficult to know what was now to be done. An assize of error, as it was called, was a proceeding known and practised by the law of England, but it had never been introduced into Scotland ; nor had it been heard of for centuries, that the king should sit in person as a judge in any criminal matter. James, however, shut his eyes to all difficulties, and determined to bring the refractory jurors to justice.² Accordingly, on the 7th of June, repairing from Falkland, he sat in person on the trial of the delinquents. All of them pleaded guilty, and put themselves, as it was then termed, in the king's will, so that there was little scope given to the exercise of regal acuteness. He made an oration, however, some sentences of which give a good picture of the style of his oratory : often pedantic and tedious, but not unfrequently epigrammatic and sententious. Alluding to the shocking state of the country and the prevalence of crimes, "I must advertise you," said he, "what it is that makes great crimes to be so rife in this country—namely, that all men set themselves more for friend than for justice and obedience to the laws. This corruption here *bairns suck at the pap* ; and let a man commit the most filthy crimes that can be, yet his friends

take his part ; and first keep him from apprehension, and after, by fead or favour, by false assize, or some way or other, they find moyen of his escape : the experience hereof we have in Niddry. I will not speak how I am charged with this fault in court and choir, from prince and pulpit ; yet this I say, that howsoever matters have gone against my will, I am innocent of all injustice in these behalfs. My conscience doth set me clear, as did the conscience of Samuel ; and I call you to be judges herein. And suppose I be your king, yet I submit myself to the accusations of you, my subjects, in this behalf ; and let any one say what I have done. And as I have thus begun, so purpose I to go forward ; not because I am James Stuard, and can command so many thousands of men, but because God hath made me a king and judge, to judge righteous judgment.

"For witchcraft, which is a thing grown very common among us, I know it to be a most abominable sin ; and I have been occupied these three quarters of a year for the sifting out of them that are guilty herein. We are taught by the laws, both of God and man, that this sin is most odious ; and by God's law punishable by death. By man's law it is called *Maleficium* or *Veneficium*, an ill deed, or a poisonable deed ; and punishable likewise by death. Now, if it be death as practised against any of the people, I must needs think it to be (at least) the like if it be against the king. Not that I fear death ; for I thank God I dare in a good cause abide hazard."

"As for them," he concluded, "who think these witchcrafts to be but fantasies, I remit them to be catechised and instructed in these most evident points."³

James, perhaps, felt somewhat doubtful upon the subject of his personal courage, and was aware that his subjects shared in his apprehensions ; but he was little aware how soon his courage and determination were to be put to the test, by the frightful state

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 5th May 1591. Also ibid., same to same, 22d June 1591.

² Ibid., same to same, 9th May 1591. Ibid., same to same, 21st May.

³ MS., State-paper Office. The inquest which first went upon Barbara Nept, called before the king in the Tolbooth, June 7, 1591.

of the country and the frequent attacks upon the royal person. So, however, it happened. Between private feuds, the continuance of Catholic intrigues, the active and indignant counter-movements of the Kirk, and the open rebellion of Bothwell, whose power and reckless bravery made him formidable to all parties, the whole land was thrown into a deplorable state of tumult and insecurity. In the Highlands, the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Moray, two of the greatest houses in the north, engaged in a deadly quarrel, which drew in the Lairds of Grant, Calder, Mackintosh, and others, and made the fairest districts a prey to indiscriminate havoc and murder.¹ At court all was commotion and apprehension from the rivalry of the Master of Glammis, who began to be a favourite of the king, and Chancellor Thirlstane, who would brook no rival in power.² On the Borders, Bothwell welcomed every broken man and cruel murderer who chose to ride under his banner. Some time previous to the trials of the witches, this daring chief had invaded the supreme court, and carried off a witness from the bar, who was about to give evidence against one of his retainers, whilst the king, although in the next room, did not dare to interfere.³ After his escape and triumph, his fierce temper impelled him to still greater excesses; and attacking the palace of Holyrood at the head of his desperate followers, he had nearly surprised and made prisoners both the king and the chancellor. Douglas of Spot, however, one of the principal leaders in this attack, lost time, by attempting to set at liberty some of his men who were imprisoned in the palace. An alarm was given: the king took refuge in one of the turrets; the chancellor barricaded his room, and bravely beat off the assailants; whilst the citizens of Edinburgh, headed by their provost,

rushed into the outer court of the palace, and cutting their way through the outer ranks of the Borderers, compelled Bothwell to a precipitate flight.⁴ He soon, however, became as formidable as ever; entered into a secret correspondence with England; leagued with the Duke of Lennox, who had quarrelled with Thirlstane; procured the countenance of the Kirk, by professing the most determined hostility to Huntly and the Catholic faction; and flattered himself, not without good grounds, that his next attack would be successful.

Meanwhile a tragedy occurred, which, even in that age, familiar with scenes of feudal atrocity, occasioned unusual horror. The reader may perhaps remember the utter destruction brought by the Regent Moray upon the great Earl of Huntly; his execution, and that of one of his sons; the forfeiture of his immense estates, and the almost entire overthrow of his house.⁵ It was now thirty years since that miserable event: the favour of the king had restored the family of Gordon to its estates and its honours, and Huntly's ambition might have been satisfied; but the deep principle of feudal vengeance demanded blood for blood; and there was not a retainer of the house of Huntly, from the belted knight that sat at his master's right hand to the serving-man behind his chair, who did not acknowledge the sacred necessity of revenge. Time, which softens or dilutes most feelings, only added intensity to this: and now, when the hour of repayment was come, the debt was exacted with fearful interest. The then Earl of Moray, a Stewart, and representative of the famous regent, was one of the bravest and handsomest men of his time, a favourite at court, and dear to the people and the Kirk, who still looked fondly back to the days of his great ancestor. In deeds of arms and personal prowess, an old chronicle describes him as a

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 7th December 1590. *Ibid.*, Lord Thirlstane to Burghley, 7th December 1590.

² *Ibid.*, Bowes to Burghley, 20th November 1590.

³ *Ibid.*, same to same, 25th January 1590-1.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to Bowes, 28th December 1591. Also *ibid.*, Bowes to Burghley, 31st December 1591.

⁵ *Supra*, vol. iii. pp. 166, 167.

sort of Amadis; “comely, gentle, brave, and of a great stature and strength of body.”¹ This young nobleman had princely possessions in the north, and for some years deadly feud had raged between him and Huntly; but Lord Ochiltree, a Stewart, a firm friend of Moray’s, was at this time exerting himself to bring about an agreement between the two barons; and had so far succeeded, that Moray, with a slender retinue, left his northern fastnesses, and came to his mother’s castle of Dunibersel, a short distance from the Queensferry. Huntly, his enemy, was then at court in constant attendance upon the king; and Ochiltree, who had communicated with him, and informed him of Moray’s wishes for a reconciliation, took horse and rode to Queensferry, intending to pass to Dunibersel and arrange an amicable meeting between the rival earls. To his surprise, he found that a royal order had been sent, interdicting any boats from plying that day between Fife and the opposite coast. But little suspicion was occasioned: he believed it some measure connected with the hot pursuit then going on against Bothwell, and was satisfied to abandon his journey to Dunibersel. This proved the destruction of his poor friend. That very day, the 7th of February, the king hunted; and Huntly, giving out that he meant to accompany the royal cavalcade, assembled his followers to the number of forty horse. Suddenly he pretended that certain news had reached him of the retreat of Bothwell; extorted from the king permission to ride against this traitor; and passing the ferry, beset the house of Dunibersel, and summoned Moray to surrender. This was refused; and in spite of the great disparity in numbers, the Stewarts resisted till nightfall, when Huntly, collecting the corn-stacks, or ricks, in the neighbouring fields, piled them up against the walls, commanded the house to be set on fire, and compelled its unhappy inmates to make a desperate sally that they might escape being burnt alive. In this outbreak the

¹ *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 246.

Sheriff of Moray was slain; but the young earl, aided by his great stature and strength, rushed forth all burned and blackened, with his long and beautiful tresses on fire and streaming behind him, threw himself with irresistible fury on his assailants, broke through the toils like a lion,² and escaped by speed of foot to the sea-shore. Here, unfortunately, his hair and the silken plume of his helmet blazed through the darkness; and his fell pursuers, tracing him by the trail of light, ran him into a cave, where they cruelly murdered him. His mortal wound, it was said, was given by Gordon of Buckie, who, with the ferocity of the times, seeing Huntly drawing back, cursed him as afraid to go as far as his followers, and called upon him to stab his fallen enemy with his dagger, and become art and part of the slaughter, as he had been of the conspiracy. Huntly, thus threatened, struck the dying man in the face with his weapon, who, with a bitter smile, upbraided him “with having spoilt a better face than his own.”³

The outcry against this atrocious murder was deep and universal. Ochiltree, who had been deceived by Huntly and the chancellor, became loud in his clamours for revenge. In the north, Lord Forbes, an attached friend of Moray, carried his bloody shirt on a spear’s head; and marching with the ghastly banner through his territories, incited his followers to revenge. In the capital, the Lady Doune, mother of the murdered earl, who with her daughters had narrowly escaped death at Dunibersel, exhibited the mangled corpses of her son and his faithful follower the Sheriff of Moray in the church at Leith; and Huntly, followed everywhere by a yell of public execration, fled first to Ravensheugh, a castle of Sinclair, baron of Roslin, and afterwards to his own country in the north.

² The simile is Ashton’s, in a letter to Bowes.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to Bowes, 8th February 1591-2. Also ibid., same to same, 9th February 1591-2.

Amid all this tumult and ardent demands for instant justice and vengeance; the king exhibited such indifference, that strange suspicions arose, not only against James, but his great adviser the chancellor, between whom and Huntly there had arisen, for some time before Moray's murder, a suspicious familiarity. Huntly pleaded a royal commission for everything he had done. It was known that the king had been deeply incensed against Moray by a report that he had abetted Bothwell in his late attempt, and had even been seen with him in the palace on the night of the attack. It was remembered that Ochiltree had been prevented, as was alleged, by a royal order sent through the chancellor, from passing the ferry on the day of the murder; and the gossip of the court went even so far as to say that the young queen's favour for Moray had roused the royal jealousy. All this was confirmed, as may well be believed, when Huntly, being summoned to deliver himself up and take his trial, obeyed with alacrity; entered into ward in Blackness castle; and after a trifling investigation was dismissed and pardoned.¹ Against this gross partiality, Ochiltree, Lennox, Athole, and the whole friends of the murdered lord, loudly remonstrated. Bothwell, a Stewart, and cousin-german to Moray, availing himself of this favourable contingency, united his whole strength with theirs. The Kirk, indignant at the king's favour for Huntly, the head of the Roman Catholics, threw all its weight into the same scale; and James soon found that Moray's death, slightly as he regarded it at first, drew after it fatal and alarming effects. In the north, the Earl of Athole, with the Lairds of Mackintosh, Grant, Lovat, and their followers, carried fire and sword into Huntly's country, and kindled throughout that region innumerable lesser feuds and quarrels, which, like the moor-burning of their own savage districts, spread from glen to glen, and mountain to mountain, till half the land seemed in

a blaze.² In the south, the Chancellor Maitland was no longer able to guide the government with his usual steady and determined hand. Hitherto he had defied all court storms, and made a bold head against his enemies; but his implication as a conspirator with Huntly in the murder of Moray, at first only suspected, but now, from some recent discoveries, absolutely certain, raised against him a universal detestation; the hatred of the people added new strength to his opponents, and he was driven from court.³

This retreat of his chief adviser weakened James; Elizabeth's coldness also annoyed him; and his uneasiness was changed into indignation, when he discovered that she looked favourably upon Bothwell; and that this traitorous subject, who had so lately invaded and dishonoured him, was in correspondence with her ministers. It was necessary, however, to dissemble his feelings, as the difficulties which now surrounded him were of a complicated kind. It had recently been his policy to balance the two great factions which divided the country, the Catholic and Protestant, as equally as possible: so that into whichever scale he threw the weight of his own authority it might preponderate. This mode of government, borrowed from Elizabeth, was more difficult to be carried through with success in Scotland than in the neighbouring country, not only from the superiority in vigour and intellect possessed by that princess over James, but from the greater feudal strength of the nobility of Scotland, and the greater weakness of the royal prerogative in that kingdom. In England various causes had concurred to destroy the greater barons: the wars of the two Roses were especially fatal to them; and it is well known that the reign of Henry the Eighth had been the grave of many of those potent

² Moyse's Memoirs, p. 98. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 1st January 1592-3. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 21st November 1592.

³ Moyse's Memoirs, p. 97. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 17, 1592.

families who, before that time, were in the habit of dictating to the crown. But in Scotland not only were the feudal prerogatives more large, but the arm of the law was weaker; and the great houses, such as Hamilton, Argyle, Mar, Huntly, Douglas, and Stewart, were fresh and in vigour. Of all this the king was so well aware, that when Bowes, the English ambassador, on one occasion complained to him, that his reforms were ever *in iieri*, not *in posse*, James answered, that to reform such nobles as he had, would require the lives of three kings.¹

There can be no doubt, however, that James, although clearly foreseeing the difficulties he was likely to encounter, had determined to weaken and suppress, as far as possible, the greater barons; and had resolved by every means in his power to strengthen the crown, raise up the middle classes and the lesser barons; and so balance and equalise the various powers of the constitution, that he should be able to hold the reins with a firm hand. There is a passage of a letter of Hudson's, one of the king's favourites, and a gentleman of his court, which points to this, and shews that, although James greatly favoured the chancellor, he was more his own minister than has been believed. Elizabeth, it appears, alarmed by some recent favours shewn to Huntly, had instructed Hudson to gain this high officer, hoping through him to influence the king; to which Hudson replied to Burghley, that the common opinion that James followed Maitland's guidance was an error; that the king was "himself the very centre of the government, and moved the chancellor and all the rest as he turned, minions and all. Although," he continued, "he bestow favour in great measure upon sundries, it doth not follow that he is directed by them. The chancellor is a great councillor, and the king seeth that his gifts merit his place; but he followeth directly his majesty's course in all."²

Acting along with this able minister, James had hitherto been able to hold in check the power of the higher nobles, and to keep the country in something like tranquillity. But the murder of Moray, the implication of the chancellor and suspected connivance of the king in this foul transaction; the compulsory retirement of Maitland, and the formidable combination which had taken place between the majority of the higher nobles and the Earl of Bothwell, threw the monarch into alarm, and forced him upon some measures which, under other circumstances, he would scarcely have adopted. His late favour to Huntly had damaged him in the affections of the Kirk: he now resolved to court its aid and to flatter it by unwonted concessions. These it is important to notice, as they led to no less a measure than the establishment of Presbytery by a prince to whom this form of ecclesiastical government appears to have been especially obnoxious. The acts passed in the parliament 1584, against the discipline and privileges of the Kirk, had long been a thorn in the side of the ministers; and they now, in an assembly held some time previous to the meeting of parliament, resolved to petition the king, not only for the abolition of these obnoxious statutes, but for a solemn legislative establishment of the Presbyterian system of church government.

Accordingly, parliament having assembled in June 1592, the assembly presented the four following articles or requests to the king:—

1. That the acts of parliament made in the year 1584, against the discipline and liberty of the Kirk, should be repealed, and the present discipline be ratified.

2. That the act of annexation should be abolished, and the patrimony of the Kirk restored.

3. That abbots, priors, and other prelates, pretending to ecclesiastical authority, and giving their vote in matters without any delegated power from the Kirk, should not be hereafter permitted to vote in parliament or other convention; and lastly,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 25th January 1590-1.

² Ibid., Hudson to Burghley, Dec. 7, 1591.

4. That the land, which was polluted by fearful idolatry and bloodshed, should be purged.¹

The first article, which went to rescind the acts of 1584, was long and keenly debated : for James was acute enough to detect the increased power which this must give to the ministers ; and it is certain that no change had taken place in the mind of the monarch as to the dangers to be apprehended from the turbulence and independence of these bold and able men. The republican principles, the austere morality, and the extreme pulpit licence of the Kirk, were wholly opposed to all his ideas of ecclesiastical polity or civil government ; but Maitland, who had now resumed his influence, though still absent from court, was solicitous to conciliate the friends of the murdered Moray, and to appease the people ; and assisting the Kirk at this moment with the full weight of his influence and advice, the king, more from policy than affection, assented to the proposal. An act, accordingly, was passed, which is still regarded as the "Charter of the liberties of the Kirk."

It ratified its system of government by general assemblies, provincial synods, presbyteries, and particular sessions. It affirmed such courts, with the jurisdiction and discipline belonging to them, to be just, good, and godly; defined their powers; appointed the time and manner of their meeting ; and declared that the acts passed in 1584 should be in no ways prejudicial to the privileges of the office-bearers in the Kirk in determining heads of religion, matters of heresy, questions of excommunication, appointment and deprivation of ministers ; that another act of the same parliament, granting commissions to bishops to receive the royal presentations to bishoprics, and to give collation, should be rescinded ; and that all presentations should be directed to their particular presbyteries, with full power to give collation and decide all ecclesiastical causes within their bounds, under the proviso that they admitted such ministers as

were presented by the king or other lay patrons.²

Had the Kirk contented itself with these triumphs, and rested satisfied in the king's present dispositions, which appeared wholly in its favour, all things might have remained quiet : for the Catholics, convinced of the madness of their projects, were ready to abstain from all practices inimical to the religion of the state, on the single condition that they should not be persecuted for their adherence to the ancient faith. But the Kirk were not disposed to take this quiet course. The principle of toleration, divine as it assuredly is in its origin, yet so late in its recognition even amongst the best men, was then utterly unknown to either party, Reformed or Catholic. The permission even of a single case of Catholic worship, however secret ; the attendance of a solitary individual at a single mass, in the remotest district of the land, at the dead hour of night, in the most secluded chamber, and where none could come but such as knelt before the altar for conscience' sake, and in all sincerity of soul ; such worship, and its permission for an hour, was considered an open encouragement of Antichrist and idolatry. To extinguish the mass for ever, to compel its supporters to embrace what the Kirk considered to be the purity of Presbyterian truth, and this under the penalties of life and limb, or in its mildest form of treason, banishment, and forfeiture, was considered not merely praiseworthy, but a point of high religious duty ; and the whole apparatus of the Kirk, the whole inquisitorial machinery of detection and persecution, was brought to bear upon the accomplishment of these great ends. Are we to wonder that, under such a state of things, the intrigues of the Catholics for the overthrow of a government which sanctioned such a system continued ; that when they knew, or suspected, that the king him-

¹ Calderwood, pp. 267, 268.

² M'Crie's Life of Melvil, p. 403. Aikman's Translation of Buchanan's History of Scotland ; with a Continuation to the Present Time, vol. iii. pp. 185, 186.

self was averse to persecution, they were encouraged to renew their intercourse with Spain, and to hope that a new outbreak, if properly directed, might lead either to the destruction of a rival faith, or to the establishment of liberty of conscience?

A discovery which occurred at this time corroborates these remarks, and drew after it important consequences. The Kirk, in the course of its inquiries, in which it was assisted by Sir Robert Bowes, the resident English ambassador, received certain information that George Kerr, a Catholic gentleman, and brother of the Abbot of Newbottle,¹ was secretly passing into Spain with important letters. Upon this, Mr Andrew Knox, minister of Paisley, setting off with a body of armed men furnished by Lord Ross, traced Kerr to Glasgow, and thence to the little isles of the Cumbrays in the mouth of the Clyde, where they seized him in the night, immediately after he had got on board the ship which was to carry him to the continent. His luggage was then searched, the packets of letters found, and he himself hurried a prisoner to Edinburgh; where the provost and the citizens, alarmed by the reports which had already reached them, received him with shouts of triumph and execration. The unfortunate man at first attempted to deny all; and as he had many friends in the council who opposed severity, was likely to escape; but at the king's special command he was put to the torture,² and on the second stroke of the boots confessed

the conspiracy; the main branch of which was to secure and hasten the descent of a Spanish force upon the coast of Scotland. This army was to be joined by the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus, with Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, uncle to Huntly, and other Catholic barons. Amongst the letters seized, and which appeared to be written by Scottish Jesuits and seminary priests to their brethren on the continent, there were found several signatures of the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus. These were written at the bottom of blank sheets of paper, with the seals of these noblemen attached to them; from which circumstance the plot received the name of the "Spanish Blanks." It was at first suspected by Bowes, who was familiar with all the *arcana* of conspiracy, that the blanks were written over with ink of white vitriol, prepared;³ but it turned out that they were to be filled up afterwards by Kerr, according to verbal instructions, and to be delivered to the King of Spain.⁴ It may well be imagined that this discovery—serious enough, certainly, in its known features, and around which there was that air of mystery which gave ample scope for all kinds of terror and exaggeration—was enough to throw the kirk and the people into a state of high excitement. The council, having examined the letters, had no doubt of their authenticity. Sir John Carmichael and Sir George Hume were sent to the king, who was at Stirling, to entreat his immediate presence. Angus, then at Edinburgh, and recently returned from an expedition to the north, was committed to the castle of Edinburgh; and proclamation made that all Jesuits, seminary priests, and excommunicates, should, within three hours, depart the city on pain of death.⁵ A convention of the nobility and Protestant gentry was forthwith held, and, headed by the ministers, pre-

¹ Newbottle Abbey, on the South Esk, near Dalkeith.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 6th February 1592-3. Bowes, writing to Burghley, says, "Commission is given to Justice-clerk, Blantyre, and George Young, to offer him the torture this day. But many think that he shall suffer the torment without confession."

It appears by a letter of Bowes to the Queen of England, 21st January 1592-3, that Mr Andrew Knox received an assurance from Elizabeth, that "good disposition and regard should be had of his labours, charges, perils, and services;" whereupon Mr Andrew returned into his country to search out the haunts of the English Catholics lurking in those parts.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 1, 1592-3.

⁴ Ibid., January 13, 1592-3.

⁵ Ibid., January 3, 1592-3.

sented themselves at the palace, and insisted on the instant prosecution and punishment of the traitors; declaring their readiness to hazard life and property in the service. The Queen of Scotland, and the powerful house of the Setons, earnestly interceded for Kerr,¹ who in the end escaped; but Graham of Fintry, found to be deeply implicated, was imprisoned; and Angus's trial and forfeiture was considered so certain, that the courtiers, wolf-like, began to smell the prey; and Sir George Hume wrote pressingly to Lord Hume, requiring him to come speedily to court that he might have his share in the spoils.²

James's conduct at this crisis was both wise and spirited. He had received information, much about the same time when the Spanish conspiracy came to light, that his traitorous subject Bothwell, who had twice invaded his palace and attempted to seize his person, was received in England and regarded with favour by Elizabeth. Now was the time, he felt, to put down Bothwell for ever. He was well aware that this fierce and formidable insurgent was favoured secretly by the Kirk, and by many of those nobles who now insisted upon the instant pursuit of the Popish earls. He was aware, too, that Elizabeth's alarm on the discovery of the Spanish Blanks would prompt her to advise the most severe measures against the delinquents, and he ably availed himself of all this. To the Kirk and the Protestant barons he gave the most friendly reception; spoke loudly of Angus's instant forfeiture; and not only agreed to the pursuit of Huntly, Errol, and their associates, but declared that he would lead the army in person and seize them in their northern strongholds. Nor were these mere words. Huntly, Errol, and Auchendown were commanded to enter themselves in ward at St Andrews before the 5th February; pub-

lic proclamation was made that all men should be ready, on the 25th of the same month, with armour and weapons, to march with the king in person against the traitors, if they failed to deliver themselves; and various committees were appointed for the examination of all suspected persons, belonging either to the nobility, barons, burgesses, or clergy.³

All this was most gratifying to the Kirk and the Protestant leaders amongst the nobility. But, in return for this, the king demanded as cordial a co-operation on their side for the attack and destruction of Bothwell, whose treasons, though of a different nature, were even more flagrant than those of the Catholic earls; and this they were not in a situation to refuse. Having thus secured the co-operation of the Kirk and the Protestant lords against Bothwell, James gave audience to Bowes, who was little prepared for the violence with which he was to be received. The ambassador had recently found himself in a difficult situation. He had been familiar with all the plots of Bothwell, and looked upon them with no unfavourable eye, although he took care not directly to implicate himself. He had repeatedly applied to Burghley to receive instructions and understand the queen's wishes: but Elizabeth was too cautious to commit herself; whilst Bowes knew for certain that she encouraged Bothwell secretly, and expressed the highest scorn and contempt for Huntly and the Spanish faction, whom she branded as base traitors who had sold their country. On this subject Elizabeth, shortly before this,⁴ had sent a letter to James, part of which, relating to the Spanish faction, from its vigour, is worthy of preservation:—

“ Advance not,” said she, “ such as hang their hopes on other strings than you may tune. Them that gold can corrupt, think not your gifts can assure. Who once have made shipwreck of their country, let them never enjoy

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, January 13, 1592-3.

² Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, January 13, 1592-3.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 19, 1592-3.

⁴ On the 4th December 1592.

it. Weed out the weeds, lest the best corn fester. Never arm with power such whose bitterness must follow after you; nor trust not their trust that under any colour will thrall their own soil.

"I may not, nor will I, conceal overtures that of late full amply have been made me, how you may plainly know all the combiners against your state, and how you may entrap them, and so assure your kingdom. Consider, if this actor doth deserve surety of life, not of land, but such as may preserve breath, to spend where best it shall please you. When I see the day, I will impart my advice to whom it most appertains.

"Now bethink, my dear brother, what further you will have me do. In meanwhile, beware to give the reins into the hands of any, lest it be too late to revoke such actions done. Let no one of the Spanish faction in your absence, yea, when you are present, receive strength or countenance. You know, but for you, all of them be alike for me, for my particular. Yet I may not deny, without spot or wrinkle, but I abhor such as set their country to sale. And thus, committing you to God's tuition, I shall remain the faithful holder of my avowed amity,

"Your most affectionate Sister and Cousin."¹

What was James's reply to this obscure epigrammatic epistle is not known; but very shortly after it was written, the Spanish conspiracy came to light, and the Scottish king at the same time discovered the favour shewn to Bothwell in England with the full countenance of the queen. Mr Lock, an agent of Burghley, and a near relative of the notorious intriguer, John Colvile, brother to the Laird of Easter Wemyss, had been sent down to Scotland with instructions to form a faction with the Kirk and the Protestant barons for Bothwell's restoration; and their plots had proceeded

so far, that the attack upon the palace, which afterwards occurred in the autumn of this year, would probably have been enterprise sooner, but for the discovery of the Spanish Blanks.² Of all these English intrigues James was now aware; and when Bowes was admitted to an audience, the monarch broke into a violent passion. The Queen of England, he declared, did him foul injustice in countenancing a rebel and a traitor like Bothwell. Her subjects received and harboured him, and they pleaded her warrant to do so. If so, he must account it done to his scorn and dishonour. However, he should investigate the matter closely; and should it turn out so, (this he said loudly, and in the hearing of many about him,) there was an end to his amity with the queen, and with every man in England.

So unwonted a storm had never yet broken the serene tenor of James's temper; and Bowes found it difficult to appease it even by the most earnest assurances of Elizabeth's innocence.³ In a subsequent interview, however, he was somewhat more successful. The Queen of England despatched a letter written wholly in her own hand, in a strain of so much conciliation, and fraught with so much sound advice, that the monarch was recovered; shewed the epistle, with many expressions of admiration, to his confidential counsellors and some of the chief ministers, and listened to their exhortations to proceed roundly against the Catholic lords. There were some difficulties, however, in the way. Huntly solemnly declared his innocence, and affirmed that the blanks were not signed by him. If he, Errol, and Angus delivered themselves by the appointed day, and were once secured in prison, there was little doubt of the issue; but if, as suspected, they fled and raised their feudal strength, the king must march against them; and, with an impoverished exchequer, who was to pay his troops?

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 27, 1592.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 19th Jan 1592-3.

Elizabeth's bounty, he said, had flowed in a far more niggard stream than had been promised. He had looked to have five thousand a year, the sum allowed by Henry the Eighth to the queen herself when princess; but she had only given him three thousand.¹ As to that occasion of which she reminded him, when one year's charges for his behoof had come to nine thousand pounds, and six thousand men been kept in readiness for his service, he protested that by no effort could he recall such things to memory; but never would he press her for money unless at a time of extreme need like the present. But to explain all more fully, he meant (as he assured Bowes) to send her an ambassador, Sir Robert Melvil, or some other confidential councillor.²

Meantime, before any such resolution could be acted on, Elizabeth's anxiety, and the alarming confessions of Kerr, prompted her to despatch Lord Burgh with a message to the king, and instructions to press on the trials of the Spanish lords by every possible method. What had been fully expected by all who knew these bold insurgents had now occurred. Instead of a surrender of their persons on the day appointed, Huntly, Errol, Auchendown, and their associates, kept themselves within their strongholds in the north. Angus escaped from the castle of Edinburgh, letting himself down the walls by a rope, and joined his friends in the Highlands; and the king's council, with the higher nobles, became cold and inactive. But the monarch himself was roused by this opposition into unwonted energy. He alone had conducted the examination of Kerr, had advocated the use of torture against the advice of his ministers, and by this horrible expedient had extorted a confession. He now hurried forward the trial of Graham of Fintry, had him found guilty, and instantly executed; and having requested the prayers of the Kirk for success in his expedition, and

appointed the Earl of Morton to be lieutenant-general in his absence, he placed himself at the head of his army and proceeded against the rebels.³ To this extraordinary vigour of the king against the Spanish faction, Bowes, in his letter to Burghley, bore ample evidence. After mentioning that Fintry had offered fifty thousand pounds Scots to save his life, the ambassador observes, "the king in this hath remained resolute; and alone, without the assistance of any of his council, prosecuted the cause. And now, he saith, that as alone he hath drawn his sword against his rebels, without the council's aid or allowance of his nobility, so he will proceed, with the help of God, to punish and prosecute the traitors in these high treasons, by all the means in his power; and with the assistance of his barons, burghs, and Kirk, whom he findeth ready to aid him therein. He was occasioned to stay his journey two days beyond his diet for the trial and execution of Fintry, and for some wants which are yet slenderly supplied: nevertheless, he is ready and determined to enter into his *rode* tomorrow, wherein he shall be well strengthened with his barons; but few noblemen shall attend upon him."⁴

On the 24th of February, Lord Burgh, Elizabeth's ambassador, arrived in Edinburgh; and on his heels came intelligence of the success of the Scottish king.⁵ James had advanced without a check to Aberdeen. Huntly and Errol, finding it impossible to make head against the royal forces, had fled, slenderly accompanied, to Caithness; and the Earl of Athole, who joined the king with twelve hundred foot and nine hundred horse, was appointed lieutenant-general beyond Spey, to reduce those unquiet regions and prevent their again falling under the power

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 14th February 1592-3. Same to same, February 15, 1592-3. Same to same, February 21, 1592-3.

² Ibid., February 15, 1592-3.

³ Ibid., Lord Burgh to Burghley, February 26, 1592-3.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 27, 1592-3.

² Ibid.

of the rebels.¹ Meanwhile, the Catholic earls were declared forfeited, and their estates seized by the crown; but, from some circumstances, it was augured that the king meant to deal leniently, and not utterly wreck them. Strathbogie castle, belonging to Huntly, was given to Archibald Carmichael, with sixteen of the royal guard for a garrison; but the Countess of Huntly, sister to the Duke of Lennox, was allowed to retain, for her winter residence, the Bog of Gicht, his greatest castle and estate. Athole received the rest of his lands, not in gift—but to hold them as steward or *factor* for the crown. Errol's father-in-law, the Earl Marshal, bought his son's escheat for a thousand marks, with the keeping of his castle of Slaines: his mother held his other house of Logie-Almond for her jointure; and Athole, whose sister he had married for his second wife, became factor of his other possessions. Angus was more severely dealt with, not being saved by any connexion or relationship with men in power.² His house and castle of Tantallon were delivered to the keeping of the Laird of Pollard; Bonkle and Preston to William Hume, brother of the king's favourite, Sir George Hume; Douglaston, and the rest of his lands, seized for debt. On the whole, however, the rebel lords, considering their crimes, were leniently dealt with. Their persons were safe in the fastnesses of Caithness; their patrimonial interest, and rights of succession, were considered to be still entire till an act of parliament had confirmed the forfeitures; and part of their estates were placed in friendly

hands. So evident was all this, that Lord Burgh wrote to Burghley, that the king "dissembled a confiscation," and would leave the rebels in full strength.³

On his return from his northern expedition, James gave audience to Lord Burgh, and expressed himself gratified by the message and advice of Elizabeth. It was her interest, he said, to co-operate heartily with him in all his present actions, and assist him to her utmost. Was she not as deeply concerned to hinder the Spaniard setting his foot in Scotland as in France or the Low Countries? At this moment money was imperatively called for; an armed force of large extent must be kept up; he needed troops to guard his person, exposed to hourly danger from the plots of his nobles, and the snares of the arch-traitor Bothwell, with whose daring character she was too well acquainted:—he needed them to overawe the districts still favourable to the Catholic lords; to garrison their houses, which, according to his good sister's advice, he had seized; to watch the coast where the Spaniards were likeliest to land: to repulse them if they effected a descent. The cause was common to both; and he looked not only for sympathy and counsel, but for hard coin and brave men. On one point he assured Burgh, that the message which he took back must be peremptory. "Bothwell," said he, "that vile traitor, whose offences against me are unpardonable, and such as, for example's sake, should make him to be abhorred by all sovereign princes, is harboured in England: let my sister expel him, or deliver him up, as she tenders her own honour and my contentment. Should he henceforth be comforted or concealed in her dominions, I must roundly assure her, not only that our amity is at an end, but that I shall be enforced to join in friendship with her greatest enemies for my own safety."⁴

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Burgh to Burghley, March 6, 1592-3.

² Angus's mother was a Graham, daughter of the Laird of Morphy. He married the eldest daughter of the Lord Oliphant. MS., State-paper Office, 1st July 1592. A Catalogue of the Nobility in Scotland. The original endorsement had been simply "Of the nobility in Scotland." Burghley has prefixed the words "A catalogue." I mention this minute circumstance to prove the authenticity of the paper, which is a highly valuable document, shewing the ages, matrimonial descent, and marriages, of the whole body of the Scottish nobility at the period, 1st July 1592. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XXIII.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Burgh to Burghley, March 5, 1592-3.

⁴ Answers for the Lord Burgh, concerning Bothwell. MS. wholly in James's hand Warrender MSS., book B. p. 401.

This spirited remonstrance was not out of place; for at this moment Elizabeth, pursuing her old policy of weakening Scotland, by destroying its tranquillity and keeping up its internal commotions, was encouraging Bothwell to a new and more desperate attempt against the king and his government. Lord Burgh had received secret instructions to entertain this fierce and lawless man. To discover his strength and means, and to increase his faction at court and with the ministers of the Kirk, was the secret part of this ambassador's mission; and when James expressed to Bowes his admiration of the eloquence, grace, and courtly manners, of this nobleman, he little knew the hidden mine which he was digging under his feet. Yet so it was. Bothwell had offered his services to the English queen; had written to Lord Burghley; had received an answer of encouragement, though cautiously worded; and had been ordered by the high treasurer to write secretly to the queen.¹ It will immediately appear how rapidly this new conspiracy came to maturity, and how suddenly it burst upon the king.

Meanwhile, the various factions and family feuds amongst the nobility had increased to such a degree, that the whole cares of the government fell upon the monarch; and James, naturally indolent and fond of his pastimes, began to languish for the return of the Chancellor Maitland. This powerful minister had been driven from court by the antipathy of the Queen of Scots, the Duke of Lennox, and the whole faction of the Stewarts, who held him as their mortal enemy, and had repeatedly plotted against his life. The exact cause of the queen's "heavy wrath" against Maitland, appears to have been a mystery alike to the king and to Bowes; but it was deeply rooted, and nearly touched her honour.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwell to Thomas Musgrave, whom he styles his "Loving brother, Captain of Bewcastle," 7th March 1592-3. MS., State-paper Office, Mr Lock's Instructions, 10th February 1592-3, wholly in Lord Burghley's hand.

He was at deadly feud also with the Master of Glammis, and hated by Bothwell, who regarded him as the author of all his calamities, and the forger of that accusation of witchcraft, under the imputation of which he was now a banished and broken man. It was difficult for the king to recall to power a minister who lay under such a load of enmity; and, for the present, he was contented to visit him in his retreat at Lethington, and consult him upon the affairs of government.² All, however, looked to his probable restoration to power; and the bare idea of it occasioned the utmost jealousy and heartburning in court.

Nothing, at this moment, could be more deplorable than the torn and distracted state of the Scottish nobility. The Duke of Lennox and the Lord Hamilton, the two first noblemen in the realm, were at mortal feud; the subject of their quarrel being an attempt, on the part of Lennox, to get himself declared the next in succession to the crown, to the exclusion of the prior right of the family of Hamilton.³ Huntly again, and all those barons who supported him, were at feud with the potent Earl of Athole, and the whole race of Stewart; the cause of their enmity being an unquenchable thirst of revenge for the murder of the Earl of Moray. Argyle, Ochiltree, and all the barons who adhered to them, were at feud with Lord Thirlstane the chancellor, Lord Hume, Lord Fleming, and their faction and allies; in which course they were urged forward by the enmity of the Queen of Scots.⁴ It is difficult, by any general expressions, to convey a picture of the miserable state of a country torn by such feuds as these. Nor were these the

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 6th February 1592-3. Also ibid., 7th April 1593. "Occurrents in Scotland" brought by the Lord Burgh, who came to the court 14th April. This endorsement is by Burghley. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 19th April 1593.

³ Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, May 20, 1593.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Occurrents of Scotland, 7th April 1593.

sole causes of disquiet : Huntly, Angus, and Errol, although declared traitors, were at large in the north ; Bothwell, whom the king justly regarded as his mortal enemy, was also at liberty, harboured sometimes on the Borders, sometimes in England, and even daring to enter the capital in disguise and hold secret intercourse with the noblemen about the king's person. The intrigues of the Catholics, although checked by the late discoveries, were not at an end ; and the ministers of the Kirk, utterly dissatisfied with the leniency which James had exhibited to the rebel earls, began to attack his conduct in the pulpit, and to throw out surmises of his secret inclinations to Popery. Is it a subject of wonder that James, thus surrounded with danger and disquietude, without a minister whom he could trust, or a nobility on whose loyalty and affections he could for a moment depend, should have been driven into measures which may often appear inconsistent and capricious ? The sole party on whom he could depend was that of the ministers of the Kirk, with the lesser barons and the burghs ;¹ and their support was only to be bought at the price of the utter destruction of the Catholic earls, and the entire extirpation of the Catholic faith.

To this sweeping act of persecution the monarch would not consent. At this moment thirteen of the nobility of Scotland were Catholics ;² and in the northern counties a large proportion of the people were attached to the same faith. It was insisted on, by the leading ministers of the Kirk, in a convention of the estates which the king summoned at this time,³ that the strictest investigation should be made for the discovery and imprisonment of all suspected of heresy ; and that, under the penalties of forfeiture and banishment, they should be compelled to recant, and embrace the reformed religion. The severity

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Burgh to Burghley, 30th March 1593.

² MS. State-paper Office, Catalogue of the Nobility of Scotland, 1st July 1592.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, April 19, 1593.

and intolerance of such demands will be best understood by quoting the words of the original. The Kirk represented that, " Seeing the increase of Papistry daily within this realm," it was craved of his majesty, with his council and nobility at that time assembled, " that all Papists within the same may be punished according to the laws of God and of the realm. That the act of parliament might strike upon all manner of men, landed or unlanded, in office or not, as it at present strikes against beneficed persons. That a declaration be made against all Jesuits, seminary priests, and trafficking Papists, pronouncing them guilty of treason ; and that the penalties of the act may be enforced against all persons who conceal or harbour them, not for three days, as it now stands, but for any time whatsoever. That all such persons as the Kirk had found to be Papists, although they be not excommunicated, should be debarred from occupying any office within the realm, as also from access to his majesty's company, or enjoying any benefit of the laws. That upon this declaration, the pains of treason and other civil pains should follow, as upon the sentence of excommunication ; and that an act of council should be passed to this effect, which in the next parliament should be made law." If the king agreed to these demands, the convention promised, for their part, that " their bodies, goods, friends, allies, servants, and possessions, should be wholly at his service, in any way he was pleased to employ them." During the whole pursuit of this cause, (the utter destruction of all Papistry within the realm,) they declared, that not only their whole numbers should be, at all times, a guard to the royal person, but that the king might select from them any force he pleased as a daily body-guard ; the pay of which, however, they prudently added, ought to be levied from the possessions of the Catholics ; and if this were not enough, they would themselves make up the difference.⁴

⁴ MS., State paper Office, "Humble petition of the General Assembly of the Kirk

To these sweeping and severe penalties, James would by no means consent; and the Kirk, irritated by his refusal, withdrew that assistance and co-operation which it had hitherto lent him in preserving peace and good order. The effects of this were soon apparent. Instead of the happy tranquillity which had reigned during his absence in Denmark, and which he had mainly ascribed to the efforts of the ministers, the capital, as the time of the parliament approached, presented almost daily scenes of outrage and confusion. The security and sanctity of domestic life were invaded and despised; ruffians under the command of, and openly protected by the nobles, tore honourable maidens from the bosom of their families, and carried them off in open day. James Gray, a brother of the notorious Master of Gray, seized a young lady named Carnegie, an heiress, and then living under her father's roof; carried her forcibly down a narrow close, or street, to the North Loch, a lake which then surrounded the castle; delivered her to a party of armed men, who dragged her into a boat, her hair hanging about her face, and her clothes almost torn from her person; whilst Gray's associate, Lord Hume, kept the streets with his retainers, beat off the provost, who attempted a rescue, and slew some of the citizens, who had presumed to interfere. Next day the chief magistrate carried his complaint in person before the king. "Do you see here any of my nobles whom you can accuse?" said James. At that moment Hume was standing beside James; but when the unhappy provost encountered his fierce eye, the impeachment stuck in his throat from terror, and he retired silent and abashed.¹ The outrage was the more

craved of his Majesty's Council and nobility presently convened. Fra Dundee, this Lord's day, 29th April 1593." Also MS., State-paper Office, "The Effects of the Answers of this Convention to the Articles proposed by the King's Majesty."

¹ MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1137. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 10th June 1593.

shameful, as Gray was a gentleman of the king's household, and had been assisted by Sir James Sandilands and other courtiers; whilst the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar were playing tennis hard by, and abstained from all interference. So atrocious an insult upon the laws, and the miserable weakness exhibited by the king and the chief magistrate, appear to have made a deep impression on Burghley, who has written on the margin of Bowes's letter this pithy note: "A miserable state, that may cause us to bless ours, and our governess."² It was not long after this that a day of law, as it was termed, was to be kept for the trial of Campbell of Ardkinglass, accused of the murder of the Laird of Caddell, a gentleman of the name of Campbell, who had himself been a principal actor in the tragedy of the Earl of Moray. Ardkinglass was a relative and favourite of Argyle, who assembled his friends, and on the day of trial entered the capital with a formidable force. The accused was about to be married to a natural daughter of Lord John Hamilton, which occasioned the muster of the whole power of that house; and the Chancellor Thirlstane, esteeming the opportunity a favourable one to exhibit his strength, and prepare the way for his return to court, rode from his retirement into the city, attended by Arbroath, Montrose, Seton, Livingston, Glencairn, Eglinton, and other powerful friends.³ This again was sufficient to rouse the fears of his enemies, (the party of the queen,) who assembled in great strength, led by the Duke of Lennox, and numbering in their ranks, Mar, Morton, Hume, the Master of Glamis, Sir George Hume, Lord Spiny, and Sir James Sandilands. The Border barons, too, Lord Maxwell and Cessford, were on their march; the

² MS., Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1137. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 10th June 1593.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 17th June 1593. Also ibid., same to same, 20th June 1593.

lords of Session, who had to try the criminal, and trembled for their lives, had resolved to raise a body of a hundred men to protect them; and the townsmen were, in the meantime, kept day and night under arms. All this was most formidable to the king, who found himself almost alone amid his difficulties.¹ The danger, too, was increased by the sudden apparition, amid the darkness, of a meteor which had ever indicated perplexity and change. Captain James Stewart, once the formidable and haughty Earl of Arran, had been seen lately in the palace. It was known he had been favourably received by James in several secret interviews; the queen and the duke were his friends; his misfortunes had neither tamed his pride, nor quelled that fierce energy and unscrupulous daring which had prompted him to destroy the Regent Morton; and at this crisis, when all were anticipating the return of the chancellor to power, it was suspected that the enemies of Maitland had determined to recall Stewart, and employ him for the destruction of this minister.² He had already pulled down one far mightier from his palmy state: what, said the queen and Lennox, was to prevent him from being successful against another?

Amid these complicated distresses James had scarcely one counsellor on whom he could rely. With his capital bristling with steel-clad barons, each feeling himself superior to the throne or the law; the streets in possession of tumultuous bodies of retainers and feudal banditti, armed to the teeth, and commanded by men at mortal feud with each other; his court and palace divided by the intrigues of the several rival factions; diffident even of the gentlemen who waited on his person; distracted by reports that troopers had been seen hovering in the neighbourhood, completely armed and disguised;³ deserted for the time by the Kirk; un-

certain as yet of the success of the embassy of Sir Robert Melvil, whom he had lately sent to Elizabeth; and tormented by hourly reports of undefined but urgent dangers and mysterious conspiracies,—the wonder is, that a prince of James's indolent and timid temper should not have sunk under such a state of things. But the emergency seemed to rouse him; and by an unusual exertion of firmness and good sense, he succeeded in warding off the dangers, persuaded the barons to dismiss their followers, and brought about a reconciliation between the queen's faction, led by the duke, and their powerful enemy the Chancellor Maitland. It had long been evident to the king that, in the present state of the country, no hand but that of Maitland could save the government from absolute wreck and disruption; and it was agreed, that on the conclusion of the parliament, which was now on the eve of meeting, this minister should return to court, and be reinstated in his high office.⁴

Scarce, however, was this danger averted than the city was thrown into a new state of excitement by the shrieks and lamentations of a troop of miserable women, who had travelled from the Borders, the victims and survivors of a recent "*raid*" conducted by the Laird of Johnston. Their purpose was to throw themselves before the king, and demand justice for the slaughter of their sons and husbands, whose bloody shirts they held above their heads, exhibiting them to the people as they marched through the streets, and imprecating vengeance upon their murderers. It was a sight which, in any other country, might well have roused both pity and indignation; but though the people murmured, the ghastly procession passed on without further notice, and neither king nor noble condescended to interfere.⁵

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, June 19, 1593. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, June 22, 1593. Also ibid., same to same, June 28, 1593.

² Ibid., 20th June 1593
³ Ibid., June 19, 1593.

⁴ MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol 1138, 1139.

The parliament now assembled; but its proceedings were delayed by a quarrel between the higher nobles for the precedence in bearing the honours. At length it was arranged that Lennox should carry the crown, Argyle the sceptre, and Morton the sword; and that, in the absence of the Chancellor Maitland, Alexander Seton, president of the Session, should fill his place, and conduct the proceedings.¹ Bothwell was then proclaimed a traitor at the Cross; and the queen's jointure, which had been settled at her marriage, and regarding which some difficulties had arisen, was confirmed. To conciliate the Kirk, an act was passed exempting ministers' stipends from taxation; another statute was introduced against the Mass; and a strict inquisition ordered to be made for all Papists and seminary priests: but on the great subject for which it was understood parliament had met, the prosecution and forfeiture of the Popish earls, the party of the Kirk were miserably disappointed, or rather, all their gloomiest expectations were fulfilled. Huntly, Errol, Angus, and Auchendown, escaped forfeiture. It had been secretly resolved by the king, that no extreme proceedings should be adopted against these noblemen, who had a numerous and powerful party on their side,² till Sir Robert Melvil, then at the English court, had brought an answer from Elizabeth; and although the Earl of Argyle, Lord Forbes, Lord Lindsay, and the Protestant faction, anxiously urged the most severe measures, James was resolute. Mr David Makgill, the king's advocate, a man of extraordinary talent, but who had often opposed the Kirk, declared that the summonses were informal, the evidence of traitorous designs and correspondence with Spain insufficient; and that it was impossible for any act of attainder to pass in the present meeting of the estates.³

¹ MS., British Museum, Caligula, D. II. 128. Bowes to Burghley, July 16, 1593.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, June 20, 1593.

³ MS. Letter. British Museum, Caligula,

This for the time settled the matter: but the Kirk were deeply indignant; and their champion, Mr John Davison, denounced the proceedings, and attacked the sovereign in the pulpit on the Sunday which succeeded their close. "It was a black parliament," he said; "for iniquity was seated in the high court of justice, and had trodden equity under foot. It was a black parliament, for the arch-traitors had escaped; escaped, did he say! no: they were absolved; and now all good men might prepare themselves for darker days: trials were at hand: it had ever been seen that the absolving of the wicked imported the persecution of the righteous. Let us pray," said he, in conclusion, "that the king, by some sanctified plagues, may be turned again to God."⁴

Such plagues as Davison thus prayed for, were nearer at hand than many imagined; for Elizabeth, according to her favourite policy, had more than one plot now carrying forward in Scotland. Her accredited ambassador, Sir Robert Bowes, was indeed instructed to keep up the most friendly assurances, and to promise the King of Scots her cordial assistance in defeating Bothwell, and destroying the Roman Catholic faction; yet at this moment she had sent Mr Henry Lock into Scotland, who, with his brother-in-law, the notorious Mr John Colvile, and Bothwell himself, met secretly in Edinburgh, and organised a formidable confederacy,⁵ the object of which was to bring in Bothwell, take possession of the king's person, overwhelm the Chancellor Maitland, who was on the eve of being recalled to power, and render the Kirk triumphant over its enemies. To this plot the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Mar, the Earl of Athole, Lord Ochiltree, and the whole noblemen and barons of the name and race of Stewart, were par-

D. II. Bowes to Burghley, July 8; also July 10, and July 14, 1593.

⁴ MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1139.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, B.C., John Carey to Burghley, August 1, 1593.

ties; and they chose this meeting of the three estates, when the king was surrounded by many of their faction, to carry their purpose into execution. The parliament was now about to terminate, when, on the night of the 23d of July, Bothwell was secretly conveyed into the house of Lady Gowrie, which adjoined the palace of Holyrood. This lady's daughter was the Countess of Athole, to whose courage and ingenuity the success of the plot was principally owing. Early in the morning of the 24th of July, she smuggled Bothwell and Mr John Colvile, by a back passage, into the anteroom adjoining the king's bed-chamber, hid them behind the arras, removed the weapons of the guard, and locked the door of the queen's bed-chamber, through which the king might have escaped. The gates of the palace were then occupied by the Duke and Athole, who placed a guard upon them. All this time James was asleep; but he awoke at nine, and calling for one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber, got up and threw his nightgown about him. An alarm now suddenly rose in the next room; and the king rushing out with his hose about his heels, and his under-garments in his hands, confronted Bothwell, who had glided from behind the hangings, and stood with his drawn sword in his hand, Colvile being beside him. James shouted "Treason!" and ran to the door of the queen's bedroom; but it was found locked; and nothing remained but to face his enemy, which, when driven to it, he did with unwonted spirit, and his usual voluble eloquence. "Come on," said he, "Francis: you seek my life, and I know I am wholly in your power. Take your king's life: I am ready to die. Better to die with honour than live in captivity and shame. Nay, kneel not man," he continued, (by this time the Duke of Lennox and Athole had come in, and Bothwell and Colvile had thrown themselves on their knees;) "kneel not, and add hypocrisy to treason. You protest, forsooth, you only come to sue for pardon, to submit yourself to your

trial for witchcraft, to be cleansed by your peers of the foul imputations which lie heavy on you. Does this violent manner of repair look like a suppliant? Is it not dis honourable to me, and disgraceful to my servants who have allowed it? What do you take me for? Am I not your anointed king, twenty-seven years old, and no longer a boy or a minor, when every faction could make me their property? But you have plotted my death, and I call upon you now to execute your purpose: for I will not live a prisoner and dishonoured. As he said this, the king sat calmly down, as if prepared for the worst; but Bothwell, still on his knees, loudly disclaimed all such murderous intentions, and kissing the hilt of his sword, took it by the point, delivered it to his sovereign, and placing his head beneath James's foot, bared his neck of its long tresses, (then the fashion of the young gallants of the day,) and called upon him to strike it off if he believed that he ever harboured a thought against his royal person.¹ The Duke of Lennox, Athole, and Ochiltree, now vehemently interceded for the earl; and James, raising him from the ground, retired into a window recess to talk apart, when an uproar arose below in the streets, and the citizens of Edinburgh, who had heard a rumour of the enterprise, rushed tumultuously into the palace-yard, headed by their provost, Alexander Hume, who loudly called to the king, then standing at the open casement, that, on a single word from him, they would force the doors and rid him of the traitors about him. James, however, who dreaded to be slain, or torn in pieces, if the two factions came to blows, commanded the citizens to disperse; and taking refuge in that dissimulation of which he was so great a master, pretended to be reconciled to Bothwell, fixed a near day for his trial, and simply stipulated that, till he was acquitted, he should retire from court. To all

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 18, 1593. Melvil's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, pp. 414, 415.

this the earl agreed. Next day his peace was proclaimed, by the heralds, at the Cross. The people, of whom he was a great favourite, crowded round him; and not only his own faction, which was very strong, but the ministers of the Kirk, shewed themselves highly gratified at his return.¹

Having settled this, Bothwell left the capital; and attended only by two servants, rode to Berwick, where he had an interview with Mr John Carey, the son of Lord Hunsdon, and governor of that Border town; shewed him the commission under the King of Scots' hand assuring him of pardon; professed the utmost devotion to Elizabeth; and declared that, within a brief season, he expected to be made "lieutenant-general of the whole country."² He then proceeded to Durham, on his road, as he said, to the English court, to confer with her majesty "what course it would please her to direct for his guidance;" and on reaching that city, insisted on thrusting himself into the confidence and becoming the guest of Dr Toby Mathews, the dean, one of the council of the north; who vehemently declined his explanations, professed his ignorance of "Scottish causes," and advised him to address himself to Burghley, Lord Hunsdon, or Sir Robert Bowes. All was in vain, however. The Scottish earl settled himself on the venerable dignitary, and "putting him to silence," ran over the story of his whole courses, and ended with his late seizure of the king. Mathews, who had no mind to be made a party in such violent matters, did not permit his eyelids to slumber till he had written an account of it all to Burghley. His letter, which is dated at midnight, on the 2d August, gives us an excellent account of the interview. "This day," says he, "about three of the clock afternoon, came hither to my house, the Earl of Bothwell, thereunto moved, as he protested, as well

by some good opinion of me conceived, as for that he understands I am one of her majesty's council established in the north. . . . And albeit I was very loath to enter into any speech of the Scottish affairs, especially of state, wishing him to write thereof to your lordship, or to the lord president; or, if he so thought good, to negotiate his business with her majesty's ambassador resident in Scotland; yet could I not avoid it; but he would needs acquaint me with somewhat thereof. . . . Wherewith, putting me, as it were, to silence, he began, with exceeding amplifications, to acknowledge himself most bounden to her majesty for the permission he hath enjoyed in Northumberland and thereabouts, notwithstanding the king's importunity and practice of his enemies to the contrary; and to protest, with all solemnity, before the majesty of God, that her highness, in regard thereof, shall ever have him a loyal and most faithful *Englishman* hereafter: albeit, heretofore, he were thought never in opinion a Papist, yet in affection and faction a *Spaniard*. 'Well done once, my lord,' quoth I, 'is double well said; which word, although he took somewhat unpleasantly, yet did it occasion him to affirm and confirm the same, over and over again, so far as possibly may stand with the amity of both the princes, and the perpetual conservation of religion now openly professed both in England and Scotland.'

"Then began he to discourse the manner and means of his late enterprise, and entrance to the king's presence; . . . which, to mine understanding, was a plain surprise of the king in his bedchamber, made by the earl and another gentleman, in the sight of the duke, the Earls of Mar and Athole, with others his friends purposely assembled: his sword in his hand, drawn; the king fearfully offering to withdraw himself into the queen's chamber, which before was devised to be kept shut against him. Howbeit, as upon short conference between the king and the earl a little apart, they soon grew to an accord. . . So he confessed to me, that, imme-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 25th July 1593. *Ibid.*, another letter, same day, same to the same.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., John Carey to Burghley, August 1, 1593.

dately after this pacification, the king used all means, rough and smooth, to sound and pierce him thoroughly: what favours have been done him; what sums of money sent him; what promises made him; what advice or direction given him from her majesty or council, or other English, to get access in court to possess the king. Whereunto the earl made answer by utter denial, saving that her highness had a princely commiseration of his distressed estate, so far only as to yield him to take the benefit of the air of her country for preservation of his liberty and life, so narrowly sought by the king; so directly and cruelly by his adversaries. . . . The king, with marvellous vehemency, insisted long upon that point, and eftsoons conjured him, 'by all the faith he bare him, by all the allegiance he owed him, by all the love he professed to him, by all the favour he hoped for ever to find of him, that he should not conceal Elizabeth's dealings from him; being,' as he said, 'a matter so manifest.' But," continued Dr Toby to Burghley, "the more violently the king sought to sift him, the more resolute was the earl, not only peremptorily to disclaim every particular thereof, but in sort, as he could, to charge the king with much unkindness and unthankfulness causelessly to carry such jealousy and suspicion of her majesty, who had hitherto been so gracious a lady, yea, a very mother unto him; and, under the providence of God, the only supporter of his estate that ever he found, or is like to find upon earth. 'Now hear, O Francis!' quoth the king, 'and have you then so soon forgotten my dear mother's death?' 'In good faith,' quoth the earl, as he saith, 'if you, my liege, have forgiven it so long since, why should not I forget it so long after; the time of revenge being by your own means, and not mine, so far gone by. A fault can but have amends, which her majesty hath made you many ways; and so hath she made me amends of all amisses, this once for all; to whom, with your pardon, sir, I will ascribe not only my lands

and living, but my life, with liberty and honour, which is most of all, not only as freely bestowed upon myself, but extended to all mine and my posterity: so as it shall never be seen or heard that ever Earl Bothwell, for all the crowns of France, for all the ducats in Spain, for all the siller and gold in the Indies East and West, for all the kingdoms in Europe, Africa, and Asia, shall utter one word in council, or bear arms in field, against the amity of the two realms and princes, and the religion now by them authorised. And farther, I make God a vow,' quoth he to the king, 'that if ye, King Jamie, yourself, shall ever prove false to your religion, and faith to your God, as they say the French king hath done to his shame and confusion, I shall be one of the first to withdraw from your majesty, and to adhere to the Queen of England, the most gracious instrument of God, and the ornament of the Christian world.' From this he proceeded to the deposition of the Chancellor Maitland, upon whom he bestowed many an ill word and many a bad name; and answered the objection of subrogating Stewart in his room, (who is not as yet, but is likely to be;) undertaking confidently to assure, that whatsoever he had done heretofore, he should henceforth concur with her highness, as well as himself, in all things lawfully to be commanded. What party they are, as well the duke and earls as other lords and lairds of most commandment, he saith your lordship shall from him receive, in a catalogue subscribed with their own hands, by Mr Lock, whom these two days he hath looked for and mervaleith not a little at his uncoming. The earl doth purpose to follow him soon after that he shall have undergone his trial for the witchcraft, which is now instant. The considerations whereof are, as he pretendeth, the only cause of absenting himself out of Scotland until the very day; lest, having now the king in his power, it should hereafter be objected, that in the proceedings thereof, he had done what himself listed. His lordship did earnestly require me, moreover, because

Mr Lock was not yet come, to remember your lordship to take order that the union intended by her majesty, between the Popish and Protestant parties in Scotland, be not overhastily prosecuted, lest the multitude of the one may in time, and that soon, wreck the other, being fewer in number, and so become rulers of the king. . . . His lordship acknowledged he hath now in Edinburgh and Holyrood House, of his own pay, a thousand soldiers, whereof the greater part are good musketeers, besides fifty horse to attend the king's person. . . . He maketh no question but by her majesty's assistance, whereupon he seemeth willing, wholly to depend, he shall be, with his friends and followers, sufficiently able to manage the estate about the king, to the peace of both realms, against all the forces and frauds of Spain. . . .

"This nobleman," so the dean concluded his letter to Burghley, "hath a wonderful wit, and as wonderful a volubility of tongue as ability and agility of body on horse and foot; competently learned in the Latin; well languaged in the French and Italian; much delighted in poetry; and of a very resolute disposition both to do and to suffer; nothing dainty to discover his humour or any good quality he hath. Now, as your lordship is like to hear of all these and many other particulars more at large, as the king's affection to the Lady Morton's daughter, and a strange letter written to some such effect, with some good assurance taken to bring a greater estate there into their association, and unto her majesty's devotion: so, since I was importuned thus far to lend him mine ear, and to relate his discourse to your lordship with what fidelity and celerity I could, I am most humbly to beseech your lordship, that in case it be not lawful (as in mine own poor opinion it is nothing convenient) for me to have talk with him or any from him, your lordship will vouchsafe so much to signify unto me by your 'honourable letter,' or otherwise, with expedition; lest by him, or some of his, I be driven to

this pressure, in a manner, whether I will or no."¹

Immediately after this visit of Bothwell to the dean, Mr Lock, the envoy of Elizabeth, who had organised the conspiracy which had thus placed James in the power of his enemies, arrived from Scotland; and by him Bothwell sent the following letter to the English queen:—

"MOST RENOWNED EMPRESS.—The gracious usage of so clement a princess towards me in my greatest extremity should most justly accuse me of ingratitude, if (being in the place wherein a little more than before I might) I should not perform those offices which then I did promise. So have I directed the bearer hereof to impart the same unto your majesty with more certainty than before; to whom, as I have [promised,] so did I move my associates in all points to ratify my speeches; and, by their oaths in his presence, confirm the same. So, fearing to offend your most royal ears, having in this, so in all other things, imparted my full mind to this bearer, whom I doubt not your highness will credit, my most humble and dutiful service being remembered, and your highness committed in the protection of the Eternal, after most humble kissing of your most heavenly hands, most humbly I take my leave."²

Having despatched this superlative effusion of flattery to his renowned empress, Bothwell addressed a few lines to the grave Burghley, thanking him for his "fatherly advices;" promising all grateful obedience, and signing himself his loving son.³ He then collected from his friends on the Border six couple of hounds and some excellent horses, as a conciliatory present to the Scottish king;⁴ and re-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Dr Tobias Mathews to Burghley, August 2, 1593.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Bothwell to the Queen, Endorsed in Burghley's hand, *Earl Bothwell to the Q. Maj. by Lock*, August 4, 1593.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwell to Burghley, August 1593.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., John Carey to Burghley, August 1, 1593. Also *ibid.*, B.C., Sir William Reid to Burghley,

turned to stand his trial for witchcraft, which had been fixed for the 10th of August.

Meanwhile, the royal captive had not been idle. Although surrounded by his enemies and strictly watched, he contrived to receive messages from Huntly, who was mustering a large force in the north; and secretly communicated with Lord Hume and the Master of Glammis on the best way of making his escape. He was assisted in this by three gentlemen of the house of Erskine, who had been permitted to remain about his person. They employed two others of his attendants, named Lesley and Ogilvy; and it was resolved that a rescue should be attempted immediately after the trial of Bothwell, when the king was to pass over the Forth from Holyrood to Falkland. A fleet horse was to be ready at the park gate; James, eluding his guards, was to mount and gallop to Lochleven; whilst Hume, with all his forces, making an onset on the opposite faction, who had been assembled for the trial in the capital, hoped either to seize their leaders or put them to death.¹ All these preparations were managed by the king with such accomplished dissimulation, that he completely blinded Bothwell and his associates.

The trial now came on, and lasted from one in the forenoon till ten at night. In the indictment the earl was accused, on the evidence of several depositions made by Richard Graham, who had been burnt for witchcraft, of three several attempts against the king's life and estate: one by poison; another by fabricating a waxen image in the likeness of the monarch; and the last, by enchantments to prevent his ever returning out of Denmark. The poison was compounded, according to the declaration of the wizard, of adders' skins, toads' skins, and the *hippomanes* in the head of a young foal; and was to be placed where it might ooze down upon the

king's head where he usually sat, a single drop being of such devilish and pestilent strength as to cause instant death. The defence of the earl was conducted by Craig, the famous feudal lawyer, who contended that Graham's various depositions were not only inconsistent and contradictory in themselves, but refuted by the declarations of his miserable sisters in sorcery, Sampson, Macalzean, and Napier; whilst he proved, by unexceptionable evidence, that Graham had been induced to accuse Bothwell under a promise of pardon signed by the king's counsel, and from the terror of being tortured. The earl also defended himself with much spirit and eloquence, and the result was his triumphant acquittal; which, considering the strength of his party at this moment, would probably have been the issue had he been as guilty as he really appears to have been innocent.²

All this took place on the 10th. On the 11th, the plot laid for the king's escape was to be carried into effect; and at three in the morning of that day, everything was in readiness. William Lesley, one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber, carrying with him the king's ring and a letter for Lord Hume, was passing as silently as he could through the courtyard; when Bothwell, who slept in the palace, was awakened by the watch, who suspected some secret practice, and rushing down seized the messenger, found on his person the king's letter and signet, and discovered the whole. The rest of the gentlemen were then arrested and delivered to the guard; and the earl, repairing to the king, who was by this time making ready to take horse, interdicted the journey, and charged him with his breach of promise. A stormy interview ensued. James insisted that he would ride to Falkland: Bothwell assured him that he should not leave the palace till the country was more settled. "You and your fellows," said James, have broken your pro-

11th August 1593; and ibid., B.C., Sir John Foster to Burghley, August 29, 1593.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 11, 1593.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, August 12, 1593.

mises, imprisoned my servants, and now think to hold me a captive. Where are the three Erskines? where is Gilbert Ogilvy? where the faithful Leslie? Did ye not swear that I should return, after the trial, to Falkland; and that you, Bothwell, should withdraw from my company as soon as you were cleared by an assize?" "And so we shall," replied the Earl. "But first, my liege, we must be relaxed from the horn, restored to our lands and offices, and see the foul murder of the Earl of Moray punished. They who slew him are known; they, too, who signed the warrant for the slaughter, the Chancellor Maitland, Sir George Hume, and Sir Robert Melville." "Tush, tush!" said the king; "a better man than you, Bothwell, shall answer for Sir Robert."—"I deny that," instantly retorted Bothwell; unless the man you mean is your majesty himself." This was a home-thrust, for it had been long suspected that the king was indirectly implicated in the fate of Moray; and when the earl proceeded to charge the Erskines with the conspiracy for escape, nothing could equal James's indignation, and all hopes of a reconciliation seemed at an end.¹ It was in vain that the ministers of the Kirk were summoned to promote peace: they prevailed nothing; and, as a last resource, Bowes the English ambassador was called in. With matchless effrontery he declared his mistress's astonishment at the enterprise of Bothwell; regretted the facility with which so treasonable an invasion had been pardoned; and expressed her anxiety for the safety of the king's person, and the preservation of the country from rebellion. James answered, that it was not for him to answer for the enterprise of Bothwell. He was no accomplice, but its victim; and for the traitors who now kept him, they had forsaken themselves, and broken every promise. Was he not prevented from free access to his own palace of Falkland? Had they not imprisoned

five of his servants, and demanded the trial of the chancellor, the Master of Glammis, and Sir George Hume? and when he asked why, insolently answered, that they might be hanged.² But let them look to themselves. He might seem in a helpless state; but he was their king: and sooner would he suffer his hand to be cut from his wrist than sign any letter of remission at their imperious bidding; sooner endure the extremity of death, than consent to live a captive, and in dishonour. Bowes assured him of his mistress's sympathy; advised an amicable settlement; and at last, after two days' labour, with the assistance of some mediators selected from the ministers, the judges of the Session, and the chief magistrates of the city, succeeded in bringing the parties to an agreement.

During the whole of these conferences, the king appears to have behaved with such unwonted spirit and resolution, that it is evident he must have been assured of a large party, and of near and speedy succour. He declared, in sharp terms, to the ministers of the Kirk, that he would either be once more a free monarch, and released from these traitors, or proclaim himself a captive: and he charged them, on their allegiance, to let his mind be known to his people; to exhort them to procure his delivery by force; and to assure them he would hazard his life to attain it.³ When Athole proposed himself to be appointed lieutenant-governor in the north, with full power against Huntly, and Bothwell claimed the same high office in the south, James, almost with contempt, refused both the one and the other; but he consented to pardon Bothwell and his associates, for all his attempts against his person; and agreed that Lord Hume, the Chancellor Maitland, the Master of Glammis, and Sir George Hume, should not repair to court till the conclusion of the parliament, which was to meet within

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 16, 1593.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 16, 1593.

³ Ibid.

a month or six weeks at Stirling.¹ Nothing, however, was farther from the king's intention than the fulfilment of these promises, which he knew he could at any future time disregard and pronounce invalid, as extorted by force; and before such time arrived, he hoped to be able to muster a party which might defy his enemies, and secure that revenge

which was only to prove the deeper, because it was dissembled and deferred. Meanwhile, with that elasticity and levity with which he could cover his gravest purposes, he resumed his gaiety, partook of a banquet at Bothwell's house in Leith, appeared wholly bent on his pastime, and rode to Inchmurrin to hunt fallow-deer.²

CHAPTER VIII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1593—1594.

In the late revolution James had exhibited unusual firmness; and this last compromise with Bothwell was almost a victory. Nor was he deceived in his expectations of still farther triumph over this insolent noble, whom he now justly regarded as the leader of the English party and of the Kirk. The resolution and courage which the king had exhibited, convinced his turbulent barons that he was no longer a minor, or a puppet, to be tossed about from faction to faction, and made the helpless and passive instrument of their ambition. Many of them, therefore, began to attach themselves to the royal faction, from self-interest rather than loyalty; and however fatal to the peace of the country, the deadly feuds which existed amongst the nobles, by preventing combination, formed the strength of the monarch at this moment. It was evident that Bothwell had either deceived Elizabeth or himself, when he spoke to Carey and Mathews of his overwhelming strength, and the facility with which he could guide the government of Scotland according to

the wishes of his renowned empress. Already his ally, the Duke of Lennox, young, capricious, and a favourite of James, began to waver; and before the appointed convention met at Stirling on the 9th of September, a powerful reaction had taken place, which no efforts of English intrigue could arrest. It was in vain that Elizabeth, Burghley, and Sir Robert Cecil his son, who now acted as a chief counsellor in all "Scottish causes," exerted themselves to keep up a faction, and even entered into a secret communication with Huntly and the Popish party, in the vain hope of bringing about a coalition between them and Bothwell. The effort to join with the Roman Catholics, whom they had so often stigmatised as enemies to the truth, only served to shew the fraud and falsehood of Elizabeth's and Cecil's constantly repeated assertion, that they were guided solely by zeal for the glory of God and the interests of the true religion; and Bowes the ambassador assured them, that if the plot for this unnatural combination went forward, the ministers of the Kirk, from whom it could

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Accord betwixt the King of Scots and Earl Bothwell, August 14, 1593.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, August 16, 1593.

not be concealed, would "greatly start and wonder hereat."¹ Besides, how was he to reconcile the course now recommended with his instructions to prosecute the Papistical rebels? How could he allow Huntly's uncle, a priest and a Jesuit, to steal quietly out of Scotland, and yet satisfy the Kirk and the Protestant leaders, that he (Bowes) was an enemy to the idolaters? All this needed to be reconciled and explained; and he begged for speedy directions.²

We have seen how completely Bothwell had been supported and encouraged in his late audacious and treasonable enterprises by the English queen. He was now to feel the fickleness of her favour: and with that deep hypocrisy which so often marked her political conduct, she addressed a letter to the King of Scots, and instructions to Bowes, in which she stigmatised the Scottish earl as guilty of an abominable fact, which moved her utmost abhorrence; and expressed

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 6th September 1593. As this fact is new, and shews the insincerity of Elizabeth and Burghley, and the sincerity and honesty of the Kirk, proving also that Bothwell's party was the party of the Kirk, I give the passage from Bowes's letter.

"The party employed to sound Chanus [Huntly] and his compartners, how they stand affected to proceed in and perform their offers made for America, [England,] letteth me know that he hath spoken with Chanus, and with such as tendered this offer for him and the rest; and that they will go forwards agreeable to the motions offered. For the which this party thus travelling herein hath promised to go forwards in his course with diligence, as all things may be effected with best expedition and secrecy, likeas it will be made known, I trust, to your lordship, very shortly. I understand perfectly that Chanus [Huntly] will both impart to Petrea, [King of Scots,] and also communicate to his partners, whatsoever shall be concredited to his trust and secrecy; and I believe, verily, that his partners binding up with Argomartes, [Bothwell,] shall acquaint him therewith. Further, this cannot be kept from the ears of the vi m £86£6 [Kirk] here, who will greatly start and wonder hereat. Therefore I beseech your lordship that this may be well considered." Bowes very naturally goes on to observe, that this course of friendship with the Catholics is inconsistent with his instructions, which commanded him to prosecute the "Papistical rebels."

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, September 6, 1593.

her unfeigned astonishment, that any subject who had acted thus insolently, had not only escaped without chastisement, but had received, as it appeared, a remission of such atrocious conduct. She alluded also, with scorn and indignation, to his refusal to prosecute those "notable traitors of the north," Huntly, Errol, and Angus, "who had conspired among themselves, and agreed to admit great forces of strangers to enter into his realm, to the ruin of his estate and the subversion of religion;" and she warned him that such sudden changes as had been brought to her ears, such capriciousness and imbecility of judgment, would end not only in the loss of his liberty, but might endanger his life.³ It did not suit James's policy or circumstances to tear the veil from these pretences at this moment; and, indeed, we are not certain that, however he may have suspected Elizabeth's double-dealing, he had detected it with anything of the certainty with which we can now unravel her complicated intrigues. At all events, he chose to fight her with her own crafty weapons, and pretended to Bowes that he was fully satisfied with her late assurances of friendship. When the appointed convention assembled at Stirling, Bothwell was commanded to absent himself from court until the meeting of parliament, which was fixed for the 14th of November; at which time the king intimated his intention of granting him a full pardon and restitution to his estates and honours, upon his submitting himself to the royal mercy.⁴ He was then to leave the realm, but enjoy his revenues in his banishment; and his accomplices in his late treasons were to be pardoned.

Such terms, with which the rebel earl was compelled to be contented, exhibited a wonderful and rapid change in the power of the king; and all perceived where James's strength lay, when Lord Hume, with the Master of

³ MS., State-paper Office, original draft of her majesty's letter to Mr Bowes, August 23, 1593.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 10th September 1593. Same to same, 15th September 1593.

Glammis, and Sir George Hume of Primrose Knowe, entered Stirling during the convention at the head of a large force. Everything was now changed, and the king spoke boldly out. He declared his resolution to cancel any promises extorted by force, when he was a captive; but promised mercy to all who repented and sued for pardon. He received Hume and his associates with open arms; sent for the Countess of Huntly to court; permitted the Catholic earls, Angus and Errol, to visit their friends without molestation; and, it was strongly reported, had consented to have a secret interview with Huntley at Falkland.¹ This northern earl had recently received great promises from Spain; and for the last eight months had maintained a large force, with which he had repeatedly ravaged the territories of his enemy Argyle, and kept the whole of that country in terror and subjection. This constant exercise in war upon a larger scale than was commonly practised in Highland inroads, had made him an experienced soldier; and James felt that, with such leaders as Huntley and Hume, he need not dread Bothwell, Athole, or their allies. All this rendered the king formidable; and soon after his triumph became complete by the arrival of his old and experienced councillor, the Chancellor Maitland, who, having been reconciled to the queen, the Master of Glammis, the Duke of Lennox, and his other enemies, rode to court, accompanied by young Cessford and two hundred horse.²

Measures now followed rapidly, of such a character as convinced the friends of England, the ministers of the Kirk, and the relics of Bothwell's party, that the king had not forgotten the late insults which had been offered him, and was preparing to take an ample revenge. Hume, a Roman Ca-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 15th September, 1593. Also, *Ibid.*, B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, 13th Sept. 1593.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 21st Sept. 1593. *Moyse's Memoirs*, Bannatyne edition, p. 105.

atholic, was made the captain of the king's body-guard; and, in the king's presence, openly threw out his defiance against Bothwell and the whole race and name of the Stewarts; who, he said, dared not take one *sillie bee* out of the moss in his bounds without his will.³ In these sallies he was not only unchecked by the king, but James, calling for the ministers, insisted that the process of excommunication, which was then preparing against this potent baron, should be abandoned, alleging that he was in the progress of conversion. It was remarked, too, that the three Catholic earls, although still excluded from court, carried themselves with unwonted bravery and confidence. Angus, visiting Morton at the Newhouse in Fife, assured him that he had better join them in time, as their increasing strength would soon compel a union; and George Kerr, the victim of the Spanish Blanks, who had not been heard of since his escape from Edinburgh Castle, suddenly showed himself at Melvil, near Dalkeith, with a troop of eighty horse, and warned the tenants of Lord Ross to cease from their labour, if they would not have their houses burned above their heads. It will be remembered that Ross's men had assisted in the capture of Kerr; and their master, as was usual in those days, had been rewarded by a grant of Melvil, and other lands round Newbottle belonging to the Kerrs. These were trifling events; but noted at the time in the pulpit, when the watchmen of the Kirk were keenly detecting how the current of court favour was setting in towards Popery.⁴

There is no good ground for suspecting, notwithstanding the strong asseverations of the ministers to the contrary, that the King of Scots had ever any serious intentions of becoming a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, or even of permitting its public profession by any one of his subjects; but he was well aware of the unprint-

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Sept. 13, 1593.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5th October, 1593. *Supra*, pp. 187-189.

cipled policy of the English queen, which, from first to last, had been directed to weaken Scotland, by creating perpetual divisions amongst its nobles ; and he had resolved, now that he was once more a free prince, and at the head of a strong party, to extinguish the fires which she had kindled, and restore, if possible, aristocratical union and general peace to the country. That such was his present object is evident from a passage in a letter of Mr Carey, the governor of Berwick, son of Lord Hunsdon, to Lord Burghley ; and the fervent hope expressed by this English baron, that the day may never arrive which shall see the Scottish nobles “linked together in peace,” is full of meaning. “For the news in Scotland,” says he, “I know not well what to say ; but this I am sure,—the king doth too much *appose*¹ himself to the Papist faction for our good, I fear. Yet here [he means in the border districts] is nothing but peace and seeking to link all the nobility together, which I hope will never be. The Papists do only bear sway ; and the king hath none to put in trust with his own body but them. What will come of this your lordship’s wisdom can best discern ; and thus much I know certain, that it were good your lordship looked well whom you trust : for the king and the nobility of Scotland have too good intelligence out of our court of England.”²

In prosecution of this design of a general union amongst his divided nobility, James opposed himself to the violent and persecuting measures of the Kirk. He knew the truth of what Bothwell had lately stated to Elizabeth, that the Scottish Catholics were so strong, that in the event of any attempt to unite them with the Protestants, they would soon rule all.³ Since then, Huntley and his friends had been daily gaining complete pre-

eminence in the north ; and to render such a party furious or desperate by processes of treason and proscription, to discharge against them, if they did not choose at once to renounce their religion and sign the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, the sharpest arrows of civil and ecclesiastical vengeance, would have been the extremity of intolerance and of folly. The king wisely declined this, and persevered in his course ; although the Presbyterian pulpits immediately opened their fire, and the provincial assembly of Fife was convened at St Andrews to consult on the imminent dangers which surrounded the Kirk.⁴

Of this religious convention Mr James Melvil, nephew of the well-known Andrew Melvil, was chosen Moderator ; and Mr John Davison, the sternest and most zealous amongst his brethren, did not hesitate to arraign the pastors of the Kirk of coldness, self-seeking, and negligence. Let them repent, said he, and betake themselves to their ordinary armour—fasting and prayer. Let the whole Kirk concur in this needful humiliation. Above all, let the rebel earls, Huntley, Errol, Angus, Auchendown, and their accomplices, whom it were idle to assail with any lighter censures, be solemnly excommunicated ; and let a grave message of pastors, barons, and burgesses, carry their resolution to the king, now so deeply alienated from the good cause : then they might look for better times. But now their sins called for humiliation ; for they, the shepherds, seemed to have forgotten their flocks ; they were idle and profane ; nor would he be far from the truth, if he declared that a great part of their pastors were at this moment the merriest and the carelesest men in Scotland. After much debate, it was resolved that the Roman Catholic rebels should be excommunicated ; and this upon the ground that many amongst them had been formerly students in the university of St Andrews, and must, therefore, have signed the Confession of Faith. The

¹ “Appose,” (*ad-pono*, or *appono*), place himself beside ; assimilate himself to the faction.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, 29th September, 1593.

³ MS., State-paper Office, B.C., Dean Toby Mathews to Lord Burghley, 2d August, 1593.

⁴ MS. Calderwood, Sloan MSS. British Museum, 4738, fol. 1140, 26th September.

terms of this sentence, in which not the whole Presbyterian sect, as represented by the General Assembly of their Kirk, but an isolated provincial synod, took upon them to excommunicate certain members of the Catholic church, were very awful. This little conclave declared, that in name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, they cut off the said persons from their communion, and delivered them to Satan, to the destruction of their flesh: it added,—that the Spirit might yet be safe, if it pleased God to reclaim them by repentance; but pronounced, if unrepentant, their just and everlasting condemnation.¹ This sentence was commanded to be intimated in every kirk in the kingdom. All persons, of whatever rank or degree, were interdicted from concealing or holding communication with the delinquents thus delivered to the devil, under the penalty of being visited by the same anathema; and the synod concluded by exhorting the pastors to whom the charge of the flock had been intrusted, to prepare themselves by abstinence, prayer, and diligent study of the Word, for that general and solemn fast which was judged most needful to be observed throughout the land. The causes for such universal humiliation and intercession were declared to be these:—²

1. The impurity of idolatry, and cruel murder committed by the Earl of Huntley and his complices.

2. The impurity of the monstrous, ungodly, and unnatural treasons of Huntley, Angus, Errol, the Laird Auchendown, Sir James Chisholm, and their accomplices.

3. The pride, boldness, malice, blasphemy, and going forward of these enemies in their most pernicious purpose, arising out of the said impurity, and their sufferance by the king; so that now they not only have no doubt, as they speak plainly, to obtain liberty of conscience, but also brag to make the Kirk fain to come to their cursed

idolatry before they come to the truth.

4. The land defiled in divers places with the devilish and blasphemous Mass.

5. The wrath of God broken forth in fiery flame upon the north and south parts of the land with horrible judgments, both of souls and bodies, threatening the mid part with the like or heavier, if repentance prevent not.

6. The king's slowness in repressing Papistry and planting of true religion.

7. The defection of so many noblemen, barons, gentlemen, merchants, and mariners, by the bait of Spanish gain; which emboldeneth the enemies: and on the other part, the multitude of Atheists, ignorant, sacrilegious, blood-thirsty, and worldly outward professors, with whom it is a strange matter that God should work any good turn; the consideration whereof upon the part of man may altogether discourage us.

8. The cruel slaughter of ministers³

9. The pitiful estate of the Kirk and brethren of France.

10. And Lastly. The hot persecution of discipline by the tyranny of bishops in our neighbour land.⁴

In addition to these bold proceedings, the leading ministers of the Kirk determined that Lord Hume, the captain of the King's Guard, should either satisfy the Kirk by his recantation, or be forthwith excommunicated. They publicly rebuked the Earl of Morton for keeping company with Errol and Angus, men branded by the Kirk as idolators; and when he defended himself by quoting the example of Henry the Fourth, the French king recently turned Catholic, they retorted that no Christian could, without error, associate with such delinquents.⁵

Meanwhile, Bothwell, instead of accepting the king's offered pardon and retiring from the realm, entered into

³ Mr James Blyth and Mr John Aikman, ministers, had been slain by the Mures.

⁴ MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1142.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 15th Sept. 1593. Also, Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 26th Sept. 1593.

¹ MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1144.

² MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1142.

fresh intrigues with England and trifled with the royal mercy.¹ But James detected these new combinations; and marching suddenly in person with a strong force from Stirling to the Doune of Menteith, where Athole, Gowrie, and Montrose had assembled with five hundred horse, attacked their company, made Gowrie and Montrose prisoners, and had nearly taken or slain the northern earl, who fled at his utmost speed with a few attendants into Athole.²

The three Catholic earls, Huntley, Errol, and Angus, now earnestly supplicated the king, that they might be permitted to stand their trial for that conspiracy of the "Spanish Blanks," of which they solemnly protested their innocence. No opportunity, they said, had hitherto been given them of defending themselves before a jury. They had been excommunicated by the Kirk, banished from court, and compelled to lead the life of fugitives and traitors, without any evidence except a confession extorted by torture, and the exhibition of some signatures asserted to be theirs, but which they would prove to be forgeries. Let them only come to their trial. If found guilty, they were ready to suffer the penalty of their crimes; if acquitted, as they trusted to be, then they would either satisfy the Kirk on the subject of their religion, and conform to the national faith, or would go into voluntary banishment.³ Not satisfied with these remonstrances, they suddenly presented themselves to the king as he rode from Holyrood to Lauder, and, falling on their knees, implored him to submit their alleged offences to the judgment of an assize. But James dismissed them with real or affected wrath, threatening that they should be worse handled for such boldness.⁴

Had the Catholic earls been sincere

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 15th Sept. 1593. James Sinclair and James Douglas of Spot to Bothwell, 1st Oct. 1593. Ibid., Lord Ochiltree to Bothwell, 4th Oct. 1593.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 5th Oct. 1593.

³ Ibid. Oct. 9, 1593. ⁴ Ibid. Oct. 12, 1593.

in the anxiety they expressed to have an impartial trial, it would have been the height of injustice to have refused their request; but it was well known that they had secretly summoned all their friends to assemble in arms on "their day of law;" and such was their present strength, that neither judges, jury, nor witnesses, could have attended with safety.⁵ It is not surprising that the Kirk should have loudly remonstrated against such hurried and premature proceedings; and at an ecclesiastical convention of ministers, barons, and burghs, held at Edinburgh on the 17th October, for the purpose of considering the imminency of the threatened danger, they selected six commissioners to repair to the palace and present their advice, beseeching the king that the trial might be delayed till the "professors of the gospel should be ripely advised what was meetest for them to do, since they had resolved to be the principal accusers of these noblemen in their foul treasons." Amongst these commissioners is found an illustrious name, John Napier of Merchiston, the inventor of the logarithms. He had taken a leading part in this convention, and was at this time probably far better known for his espousal of the principles of the Kirk than for that profound genius which was to enlarge, by his wonderful discovery, the boundaries of science, and confer imperishable lustre upon his name.⁶ His brother commissioners were, Mr James Maxwell of Calderwood, who along with Napier represented the barons; Mr James Melville and Mr Patrick Galloway, ministers; and the two commissioners of Edinburgh and Dundee. These ecclesiastical commissioners were directed to remonstrate with the king against any premature trial of the Roman Catholic earls. They accordingly craved that such excommunicated and treasonable apos-

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 18th Oct. 1593.

⁶ Memoirs of John Napier of Merchiston, by Mark Napier, Esq., his direct descendant, pp. 162, 163, 164. An interesting and valuable work, written by an old and much esteemed friend of the author.

tates should, "according to the lovable laws and customs of Scotland, be imprisoned till the estates of parliament had advised on the manner of their trial; that the jury should be nominated, not by the accused, but by the accusers; that as the foresaid traitors were excommunicated and cut off from the society of Christ's body, (to use the strong and revolting language of the original,) they should not be admitted to trial, or have any benefit of the law, till they were again joined unto Christ and reconciled to his Kirk." These, however, were not all the demands and proceedings of the Kirk. They resolved, that if their enemies attended in arms, they should meet them in the same fashion; desiring the king's permission that "the professors of religion may be his majesty's guard, and be admitted in the most fencible and warlike manner to be about the royal person, to defend it from violence, and accuse their enemies to the uttermost: and this," they added, "we are minded to do, although it should be with the loss of all our lives in one day; for certainly we are determined that the country shall not bruik us and them baith, so long as they are God's professed enemies."¹ In furtherance of these preparations, the Kirk directed the moderator of every presbytery to advertise each particular brother in the ministry within their bounds, to warn the noblemen, gentlemen, barons, and burgesses, to muster in warlike arms and array in Perth, on the 24th of the month, the expected day of trial; and appointed twelve ministers as commissioners, to be resident in the capital till the answer to their demand was returned by the king.² When the commissioners of the Kirk presented their petitions to James at Jedburgh, he refused to acknowledge any convention which had been summoned without his order; and after an angry interview, passed in mutual complaint

and accusation, peremptorily declined returning any written reply to the Assembly. The state of matters now became alarming; and Bowes, the English ambassador, who watched it from hour to hour, wrote thus to Burghley on the 18th October:— "Yesterday, at the meeting of the commissioners of the Kirk, the barons and burghs convened here together. . . . Great preparations are made for the advancement of the course thus resolved, and to stop the trial to be given at this time to these earls, whose friends (as it is told me) have mustered, and are in readiness to come to Perth at the day limited: they have already provided that the Water Gate, or Water Street, shall be reserved for the earls and their companies. But Athole, Gowrie, and many of the town, are rather disposed to keep them out. The convocation and access of people to that place is looked upon to be so great that thereon bloody troubles shall arise."³

A collision appeared now inevitable; and there were many causes which promised to make it, when it did occur, one of a fearful description. The opposite factions, whose partisans were flocking from all parts towards Perth, the anticipated scene of the trial, were animated by the most bitter and revengeful feelings; their blood was boiling under the influence of family feuds, religious persecution, and fanatical hatred. The advocates for peace were browbeaten, and their voices drowned in the din of arms and proclamations of mutual defiance; and all this was exasperated and increased by the warlike denunciations of the Kirk, which, by its thousand trumpet-tongues, through the length and breadth of the land, summoned all who loved the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to gird on their weapons, and, if necessary, die for their faith. Had things been allowed to continue in this state, and the muster taken place at Perth, a few days more might have kindled the flames of civil war in the country, and deluged it with

¹ MS., State-paper Office. Certain Petitions and Conclusions considered upon by the Commissioners for the Kirk. Barons, and Burgesses of Edinburgh, 17th Oct. 1593.

² Ibid.

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³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, 20th Oct. 1593.

blood; but at this crisis James wisely interdicted the trial from being held at Perth, and resolved that a solemn inquiry into the conduct of Huntly, Angus, and Errol should take place before commissioners to be selected from the nobility, the burghs, and the Kirk. To secure tranquillity, public proclamation was made, that none except such as were especially called for should presume to attend the convention: that the three earls, dismissing their forces, should await the king's determination at Perth; and that, in the mean season, none should molest them during the trial or inquiry which was about to take place. At all this the Kirk stood aghast. They had insisted on the imprisonment of the three earls. They had argued that, till they signed the Confession of Faith, and reconciled themselves to the Kirk, they could not be recognised or permitted to take their trial; that they ought to have no counsel to defend them; and that the Kirk, as their accuser, should nominate the jury. Its ministers now complained, threatened, and remonstrated;¹ but when the day appointed for the convention arrived, they found the king not only resolved to abide by his own judgment, but so strongly supported by the nobility whom he had summoned, that it would be vain to attempt resistance.

James, who had taken time to consider all coolly, on weighing the whole circumstances, found it necessary to steer a middle course. The trial was postponed, as it was believed that no jury could be found at that moment "so void of favour and partiality" as to condemn the earls; and, on the other hand, if acquitted, no terms or conditions could be imposed on them which their power would not enable them to despise and infringe.² As to the accused themselves: on the one hand, they persisted in asserting their innocence as to the "Spanish Blanks," which they were accused of having

signed, or of any conspiracy to bring foreign forces into the realm; on the other, they confessed that they had received Jesuits, heard Mass, revolted from the Presbyterian faith against their public profession and subscription, refused to obey their summons for treason, and committed other acts against the laws, for which they were willing, they said, to put themselves in the king's mercy. All this was laid before a committee who represented the three estates—nobles, barons, and burghs; the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar appearing for the earls; the Lord Chancellor Maitland and Lord Livingstone for the lords, with whom sat all the councillors of estate; the barons being represented by four of their number, the burghs by five burgesses, and the Kirk by six of the leading ministers; who, however, appeared only as petitioners, and did not sit or vote as commissioners. After mature deliberation with this committee, the king, adopting, as far as he was permitted, a wise mean between the extremity of persecution recommended by the Kirk, and that toleration which was rather implored and hoped for than claimed as a right by the Catholics, pronounced his sentence. He declared, in this "act of abolition," as it was called, that he was firmly resolved that God's true religion, publicly preached, and by law established, during the first year of his reign, should alone be professed by the whole body of his subjects; and that all who had not embraced it, or who had made defection from it, should, before the 1st of February next, obey the laws by professing it, and thus satisfy the Kirk; or, if they found this against their conscience, should depart the realm to such parts beyond seas as he should direct, there to remain till they embraced the true religion, and were reconciled to the Kirk; but he added, that during this banishment they should enjoy their lands and living. As to those persons who had been accused of a treasonable conspiracy with Spain for the overthrow of the true religion—William earl of

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Nov. 12, 1593. Also, same to same, 17th November, 1593.

² Ibid., 23d November, 1593.

Angus, George earl of Huntly, Francis earl of Errol, Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, and Sir James Chisholm of Cornileys—he pronounced them “free, and unaccusable in all time coming of any such crimes :” and annulled all legal proceedings which had been instituted against them, ‘unless they showed themselves unworthy of pardon by directly renewing their intrigues, or threatening, either by word or deed, any repetition of their treason. If they chose to renounce their idolatry, to embrace the Presbyterian opinions, satisfy the Kirk, and remain to enjoy their estates and honours within their own land, it was intimated to them, and to all other Catholics, that this must be done on or before the 1st day of February next ; and, on the contrary, if they preferred to retain their faith and enter into exile, then they were to give assurance that, during its continuance, they should refrain from all practices with Jesuits or seminary priests against their native country. It was lastly declared, that they should express to the king and the Kirk their acceptance of one or other of these conditions before the 1st of February next.¹

To our modern and more Christian feelings this sentence must appear as unwise as unmerciful ; for it disavowed the possibility of toleration, held out a premium to religious hypocrisy, and punished sincerity and honesty of opinion with perpetual banishment. James had hoped that it might pacify the country ; but it experienced the common fate of middle courses, and gave satisfaction to no party. The Catholics, who had never intermitted their intrigues with Spain, had lately received assistance and encouragement from that country ; they commanded almost the whole of the north ; and were in no temper to resign their religion, or retain it at the expense of perpetual exile. They temporized, therefore ; affected a sub-

mission which they did not feel, and continued to strengthen themselves both at home and abroad for a new struggle. But if the Catholics were discontented, the Kirk received the act of abolition with mingled wrath and lamentation. It actually seemed to them an insufficient security, and a trifling punishment, that no man was to be permitted to remain within the realm, and enjoy his estate and the protection of the law, unless he signed the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. The profanation was, that any man should be at liberty to retain his belief in the Roman Catholic faith, and his Scottish estates, if he consented to banish himself from his native country. The feelings of the leaders of the Kirk upon this subject are thus described by Bowes, an eye-witness, in his letter to Burghley :—

“ This edict, and act of oblivion, is thought to be very injurious to the Church, and far against the laws of God and this realm ; whereupon the ministers have not only openly protested to the king and convention that they will not agree to the same, but also, in their sermons, inveigh greatly against it ; alleging that, albeit it hath a pretence to establish one true religion in the realm, yet liberty is given to all men to profess what they list, so they depart out of the realm ; and thereby they shall enjoy greater privileges and advantages than any other good subject can do. That this is very dangerous to the religion, and to all the professors thereof, that the crimes of these offenders shall be thus slightly passed over ; and this notwithstanding their treasons and faults are so manifest and odious, as the king once confessed that he had not power to pardon them, and promised, as he was a Christian prince, to punish them with all rigour. And the parties thus offending have now been detected four times, and escaped punishment for like treasons and conspiracies.”¹

At this convention the king, who now found himself strong enough to

¹ MS., State-paper Office. Act of the Convention at Holyrood House, 26th November, 1593 ; with Burghley’s Notes on the margin. It is printed by Spottiswood, p. 400.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 2, 1593.

disclose his true feelings, exhibited the intensity of his wrath against Bothwell. It was in vain that the queen, and those nobles who had attached themselves to her service, interceded for the delinquent. He was commanded to leave the realm within fifteen days; and James refused to listen to any offers, or to hold out the slightest hopes of forgiveness, till this order had been obeyed. The friends of the rebel earl were treated with equal severity. Lords Doune and Spiny, with Mr John Russell, an eminent advocate who had pleaded his cause, were imprisoned; and it was evident that all hope of reconciliation must be abandoned.¹

The act of oblivion proved as distasteful to Elizabeth as it was to either the Catholics or the Kirk. This great princess had recently received intelligence of the continued intrigues carried on by Jesuits and seminary priests in Scotland. One of these busy emissaries, Thomas Macquaharry, a Scottish Jesuit, who had been employed by Lady Hume, and had carried on his secret practices in different parts of England, had been recently seized by Sir John Carey at Berwick. It was reported that another Scottish Jesuit, Mr James Gordon, with William Gordon of Strathdon, a brother of the Earl of Huntly, and four or five other Catholics, had passed over from Scotland to Dunkirk;² and Mr James Craig, a gentleman resident at Bourdeaux, wrote to his brother Mr Thomas Craig, the celebrated feudal lawyer, then an advocate at the Scottish bar,³ that an army and fleet were being equipt in Spain, which were suspected to be destined for Scotland. Ireland continued to be the theatre of perpetual intrigue and commotion; and the English queen had taken the adoption

of the Catholic faith by Henry the Fourth greatly to heart. She was, therefore, in a highly excited state when she received from Bowes, her ambassador, the news from Scotland; and lost no time in despatching Lord Zouch with a violent open remonstrance, and a letter of secret rebuke, written wholly in her own hand.⁴ This last was in these nervous and scornful terms:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—To see so much, I rue my sight that views the evident spectacle of a seduced king, abusing counsel, and wry-guided kingdom. My love to your good and hate of your ruin, breeds my heedful regard of your surest safety. If I neglected you, I could wink at your worst, and yet withstand my enemies' drifts. But be you persuaded by sisters. I will advise you, void of all guile, and will not stick to tell you, that if you tread the path you chuse,⁵ I will pray for you, but leave you to your harms.

"I doubt whether shame or sorrow have had the upper hand when I read your last lines to me. Who, of judgment, that deemed me not simple, could suppose that any answers you have writ me should satisfy, nay, enter into the opinion of any one not void of four senses, leaving out the first.

"Those of whom you have had so evident proof by their actual rebellion in the field you preserve, whose offers you knew then so large to foreign princes. And now, at last, when, plainest of all, was taken the carrier himself, confessing all before many commissioners and divers councillors; because you slacked the time till he was escaped, and now must seem deny it, (though all men knew it:) therefore, forsooth, no jury can be found for them. May this blind me that knows what a king's office were to do? Abuse not yourself so far. Indeed, when a weak bowing and a slack seat in government shall appear, then bold spirits will stir the stern, and guide the ship to greatest wreck."

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, December 2, 1593.

² Ibid., November 24, 1593. Also ibid., December 2, 1593.

³ MS., State-paper Office. The clause in the letter of James Craig at Bourdeaux, to his brother, Mr Thomas Craig, advocate in Edinburgh.

⁴ Camden, Elizabeth in Kennet, vol. ii.

⁵ In the copy in the State-paper Office, "the path you are in."

and will take heart to supply the failure.

"Assure yourself no greater peril can ever befall you, nor any king else, than to take for payment evil accounts; for they deride such, and make their prey of their neglect. There is no prince alive, but if he shew fear or yielding, but he shall have tutors enough, though he be out of minority. And when I remember what sore punishment those so lewd traitors should have, then I read again, lest at first I mistook your mind; but when the reviewing granted my lecture true, Lord! what wonder grew in me that you should correct them with benefits who deserve much severer correction. Could you please them more than save their lives and make them shun the place they hate, where they are sure that their just deserved haters dwell, and yet as much enjoy their honours and livelihoods, as if for sporting travel they were licensed to visit other countries? Call you this a banishment —to be rid of whom they fear and go to such they love? Now, when my eyes read more, then smiled I to see how childish, foolish, and witless an excuse the best of either three made you, turning their treasons' bills to artificers' reckonings with *items* for many expenses, and lacked but one billet which they best deserved, an *item* for so much for the cord whose office they best merited. Is it possible that you can swallow the taste of so bitter a drug, more meet to purge you of them, than worthy for your kingly acceptance? I never heard a more deriding scorn; and vow that, if but this alone, were I you, they should learn a short lesson.

"The best that I commend in your letter is, that I see your judgment too good to affirm a truth of their speech, but that alone they so say. Howbeit, I muse how you can want a law to such, as whose denial, if it were ever, could serve to save their lives, whose treasons are so plain; as the messenger who would for his own sake not devise it, if for truth's cause he had it not in his charge: for who should

ever be tried false, if his own denial might save his life? In princes' causes many circumstances yield a sufficient plea for such a king as will have it known: and ministers they shall lack none, that will not themselves gainsay it. Leave off such cloaks, therefore, I pray you; they will be found too thin to save you from wetting. For your own sake play the king, and let your subjects see you respect yourself, and neither to hide or to suffer danger and dishonour. And that you may know my opinion, judgment, and advice, I have chosen this nobleman, whom I know wise, religious, and honest; to whom, I pray you, give full credit, as if myself were with you; and bear with all my plainness, whose affection, if it were not more worthy than so oft not followed, I would not have gone so far. But blame my love if it exceed any limits. Beseeching God to bless you from the advices of them that more prize themselves than care for you, to whom I wish many years of reign."¹

It was not to be expected that a letter like this, containing so much disagreeable advice and cutting sarcasm, and which in its involved, but often energetic and condensed periods, affordeth so good a specimen of Elizabeth's private epistolary style, should have been acceptable to James; but when Lord Zouch presented it at his audience on the 13th January,² the king dissembled his chagrin and received him with apparent courtesy. He professed his anxious desire to live on terms of amity with his good sister; observed, that as for the act of abolition to the Catholic earls, which her majesty disliked so much, it was now itself abolished by their not accepting it, and he was entirely free from any agreement. He knew, he said, in answer to Zouch's remonstrances on

¹ This interesting letter is now printed (for the first time) from the original, in the queen's own hand, preserved in the collections of Sir George Warrender. There is a contemporary copy in the State-paper Office.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 15, 1593-4. Ibid., Lord Zouch to Burghley. Also MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, D II. 169.

his supposed Spanish predilections, what it was to lose an old friend and to trust a new. As to the councillors, of whom she complained, he must confide in his council as she confided in hers; but he was the last who would suffer any ill affected to insinuate themselves amongst his ministers.¹

With these general assurances, Elizabeth's ambassador would not be satisfied. He called on the king for deeds, not words; insisted that his royal mistress was entitled to have an express written declaration of the course which the king was determined to follow with the rebel earls and the Catholic party, still busy in their plots for the invasion of England and the destruction of their common faith;² and lamented, in his letter to Lord Burghley, that he was utterly unfit to cope with the difficulties which met him on every hand. The Lord Chancellor Maitland, whom he was taught to consider the wisest and most upright of the king's councillors, plotted, as he suspected, against him; and had received, it was said, great sums of money from the Catholic faction. He was surrounded by falsehood and suspicion; distracted by contrary reports; and so strictly watched, that none came near him but those whom the king permitted.

All this, however, did not prevent Zouch from fulfilling the more secret part of his instructions; nor, although he affected to be deeply shocked with the political profligacy and dissimulation of the Scottish nobles, was he himself by any means a novice in intrigue. Whilst assuring James of Elizabeth's unshaken friendship and zeal for his welfare, he opened a communication with his bitter foe, the fierce and reckless Bothwell; and arranged with this earl, John Colvile, brother of the Laird of Wemyss, Henry Lock, an agent of Sir Robert

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Zouch to Burghley, January 15, 1593-4. Also ibid., same to the same, January 26, 1593-4.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 27, 1593-4. Also ibid., B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, January 25, 1593-4.

Cecil, and some of the most violent ministers of the Kirk, a new plot for the surprise of the king. It was resolved that Athole and Argyle, with the whole strength of the north, should advance to Edinburgh; form a junction with the forces of Bothwell, Montrose, Ochiltree, and the Laird of Johnston; and attacking the Chancellor Maitland, Lord Hume, and the friends of the king, at once destroy Huntly and the Roman Catholics, save James from evil counsellors, and take an ample revenge for the murder of the Earl of Moray.³ These designs were the more unjustifiable at this moment, as the monarch had adopted strong measures against the Roman Catholic earls. He had declared them excluded from all benefits of the act of abolition;⁴ had summoned them, on the penalty of being outlawed, to deliver themselves up, and take their trials for treason; called a parliament, which was to be held in April; appointed a new council of more neutral and well-affected nobles and barons; and had professed to Elizabeth, in a written answer to Zouch's instructions, his continued desire of friendship and good faith. In an interview, also, which Bowes the resident ambassador had with James's great adviser the Chancellor Maitland, the Scottish lord assured him that his royal mistress need not distress herself with suspicions of his master. He was steadfast, he affirmed, in his religion, whatever Papists or the Kirk might affirm: nothing would induce him to embrace the Spanish courses; and for an invasion of England, he knew it would be madness.⁵ Yet Zouch continued his plots; and

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lord Zouch to Burghley, January 15, 1593-4. Also MS., British Museum, Caligula, D II. 151. Instructions for Lord Zouch for treating with certain lords in Scotland.

⁴ Supra, p. 210.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, January 8, 1593-4. Ibid., same to same, January 15, 1593-4. Also ibid., same to same, January 20, 1593-4. Also MS., State-paper Office, "Councillors newly established by the King of Scots," January 17, 1593-4, in Burghley's handwriting. Also ibid., Bowes to Burghley, January 20, 1593-4. Also British Museum, Caligula, D II. 169, 182.

Elizabeth undoubtedly gave them her secret encouragement; although, with her usual caution and parsimony, she abstained from any large advances either in money or troops.

In the midst of these intrigues and dangers a joyful event occurred. The queen brought forth a son, her first child, in the castle of Stirling, on the 19th of February; and the monarch immediately committed the charge and government of the infant heir to the throne to the Earl of Mar, captain and keeper of the castle of Stirling; “whose uncle and goodsire, [it is stated in the act of appointment,] by three descents together, have had the custody and governance of the sovereign princes of this realm.”¹ By the nation this event was hailed with universal joy; an old chronicle declaring that “the people, in all parts, appeared to be daft for mirth.”² But scarcely was the child born ere he became a mark for treachery; the conspirators proposing to Lord Zouch, that when they advanced on Stirling, they should strengthen their hands by seizing the infant heir to the crown, and thus extort better terms from the king. It was a game which had already been played in the days of James the Third. The English ambassador, however, protested against such an outrage, and his associates did not dare to disobey.

All was now ripe for Bothwell’s attempt; but the king proved too crafty and strong for his adversaries. He had received secret information of the plot; seized a gentleman of Zouch’s suite, who had communicated with the traitors; commanded Lord Hume, Cessford, and Buccleuch, to concentrate their strength at Kelso, where it was expected the enemy would cross the Border; imprisoned some of the boldest and busiest ministers of the Kirk; and addressing the people in the High Church of Edinburgh after the sermon, informed them in stirring terms, of the insolence of Bothwell, that audacious rebel, who was at that

moment on his way to attack his lawful prince; declared his resolution to lead his whole force in person against him; and, raising his hand to heaven, took a solemn vow to God, that if they, for their part, would instantly arm and advance with him into the field, he, for his, would never rest till, in return for such service, he had utterly suppressed and banished the Catholic lords from his dominions.¹ Scarcely had James ended this appeal, when word was brought that Bothwell, who had out-maneuvred Hume and Buccleuch, was at hand, at Leith, with six hundred horse, awaiting the junction of Athole and Argyle, whom he expected to cross the Forth with their northern strength, and shewing intentions of intrenching himself within the old fortifications on the Links. Without a moment’s delay, the king assembled his troops, and marched against him. The advance consisted of a thousand pikemen and five hundred horse; the rear, of the infantry of the city of Edinburgh, in number about a thousand musketeers; and besides these, there were three guns covered by a body of two hundred horse. Despairing of being able to withstand such a force within the intrenchments, Bothwell retired deliberately, and in good order, in a south-easterly direction, round the roots of the hill of Arthur Seat, towards Niddry, where he halted on a neighbouring field, which offered him an excellent position. James, observing this movement, now dreaded an attack of his capital on the south side, where it was undefended; and ordering Hume at the head of the cavalry, to advance to Niddry, countermarched through Edinburgh, and took up his ground with the remainder of the troops on the Borough Muir. Meanwhile, Hume and Glammis had reached a hill beside Niddry, and were hesitating to make the onset, when Bothwell, Lord Ochiltree, and the gentlemen with them, “after prayers on their knees,” assailed them with loud shouts of “God and the Kirk,” drove them from their ground, slew twelve

¹ MS., State-paper Office, February 21, 1593. Lord of Mar anent the keeping of the young Prince.

² Moyse’s Memoirs, p. 113.

³ Historie of James the Sext, p. 304.

of their troopers, and chased them to within a short distance of the spot where the king stood. They then sounded their trumpets, and retired in good order by Craigmillar without losing a man. In this onset, Bothwell took Hume's cornet and trumpet, to whom he gave his liberty; and presenting him with two rose nobles, sent by him a challenge to his master.¹ This defeat took place on an eminence beside Niddry, called Edmeston Edge.² Bothwell now retreated to Kelso; and, aware of the hopelessness of his enterprise, soon after dispersed his company, and became once more a refugee in England.

The king, delivered for the present from all apprehensions on this quarter, now determined to fulfil his promise, and deprive the Queen of England and the ministers of the Kirk of all pretence of opposition, by adopting the most vigorous proceedings against the Catholic earls, Huntley, Angus, and Errol. Proclamation was made, that these noblemen should appear and take their trial before the parliament to be held in May. The whole force of his realm was summoned to meet him in arms, to be led against the rebels if they resisted; and Colville of Easter Wemyss, one of the best military leaders then in Scotland, with Mr Edward Bruce, an influential minister of the Kirk, were dispatched on an embassy to Elizabeth. The general object of their mission was to assure her of their master's resolute determination to reduce the Catholic earls, and for ever put an end to the Spanish intrigues; but before pro-

ceeding to any other point, they were enjoined to remonstrate, in the strongest terms, against the support lately given in England to the king's avowed rebel, the Earl of Bothwell. We have seen the bitter and sarcastic letter which Elizabeth, three months before, had sent to the king by the Lord Zouch. It was now his time to reply to it, and have his revenge; which he did by the following private epistle, intrusted to his ambassadors, written wholly in his own hand, and certainly not inferior, either in irony or vigour, to the production of his good sister:

"So many unexpected wonders, madam and dearest sister, have of late so overshadowed my eyes and mind, and dazzled so all my senses, as in truth I neither know what I should say, nor whereat first to begin: but thinking it best to take a pattern of yourself, since I deal with you, I must, repeating the first words of your last letter, (only the sex changed,) say I rue my sight that views the evident spectacle of *a seduced queen*. For when I enter betwixt two extremities in judging of you, I had far *rathest* interpret it to the least dishonour on your part, which is ignorant error. Appardon me, madam; for long approved friendship requires a round plainness. For when first I consider what strange effects have of late appeared in your country; how my avowed traitor hath not only been openly reset in your realm, but plainly made his residence in your proper houses; ever plainliest *kything*¹ himself where greatest confluence of people was; and, which is most of all, how he hath received English money in a reasonable quantity; waged both English and Scottish men therewith; proclaimed his pay at divers parish churches in England; convened his forces within England, in the sight of all that border: and therefrom contemptuously marched, and camped within a mile of my principal city and present abode, all his trumpeters, and divers waged men, being English; and being by myself in person repulsed from that place, returned back in Eng-

¹ We learn from Henry Lock's letter to Sir Robert, describing the "rajd," and written from Berwick only two days after the action, that before they charged their adversaries, Bothwell and his companions exclaimed, that "that day her Majesty should see proof of their intentions and faith." MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Henry Lock to Sir R. Cecil, April 5, 1594. By a letter from Bowes to Burghley of April 13, 1594, State-paper Office, and another, of the same date, from Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, we learn, that the management of Scottish affairs, owing to the increasing infirmities of Lord Burghley, had been intrusted, by the Queen, to his son Sir Robert Cecil, one of the privy-council.

² Moyse's Memoirs, p. 115.

¹ Kything himself; showing himself.

land with displayed banners; and since that time, with sound of trumpet, making his troops to muster within English ground: when first, I say, I consider these strange effects, and then again I call to mind, upon the one part, what number of solemn promises, not only by your ambassadors, but by many letters of your own hand, ye have both made and reiterated unto me, that he should have no harbour within your country; yea, rather stirring me farther up against him, than seeming to pity him yourself; and upon the other part, weighing my desires towards you,—how far being a friend to you I have ever been an enemy to all your enemies, and the only point I can be challenged in, that I take not such form of order, and at such time, with some particular men of my subjects as peradventure you would, if you were in my room; when thus I enter in consultation with myself, I cannot surely satisfy myself with wondering upon these above-mentioned effects: for to affirm that these things are by your direction or privity, it is so far against all princely honour, as I protest I abhor the least thought thereof. And again, that so wise and provident a prince, having so long and happily governed, should be so fyled and contemned by a great number of her own subjects, it is hardly to be believed; if I knew it not to be a maxim in the state of princes, that we see and hear all with the eyes and ears of others, and if these be deceivers, we cannot shun deceits.

"Now, madam, I have refuge to you at this time, as my only pilot to guide me safely betwixt this *Charybdis and Scylla*. Solve these doubts, and let it be seen ye will not be abused by your own subjects, who prefer the satisfying of their base-minded affections to your princely honour. That I wrote not the answer of your last letters with your late ambassador, (Lord Zouch,) and that I returned not a letter with him, blame only, I pray you, his own behaviour; who, although it pleased you to term him wise, religious, and honest, had been

fitter, in my opinion, to carry the message of a herald, than any friendly commission betwixt two neighbour princes: for as no reason could satisfy him, so scarcely could he have patience even to hear it offered. But if you gave him a large commission, I dare answer for it he took it as well upon him: and therefore have I rather chused to send you my answer by my own messengers. Suffer me not, I pray you, to be abused with your abusers; nor grant no oversight to oversee your own honour. Remember what you promised by your letter of thanks for the delivery of O'Rorick. I trust you will not put me in balance with such a traitorous counterpoise, nor willingly reject me; constraining me to say with Virgil—

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

And to give you a proof of the continuance of my honest affection, I have directed these two gentlemen unto you, whom I will heartily pray you to credit as myself in all they have in charge; and because the principal of them goes to France, to return the other back with a good answer with all convenient speed."¹

This spirited remonstrance had the best effect upon Elizabeth, who, although she had encouraged Bothwell in his late audacious attempts, never felt much scruple in discarding an unsuccessful instrument. She was, accordingly, all smiles to the ambassadors, when, in their master's name, they invited her to stand godmother at the approaching baptism of the infant heir to the Scottish throne; and although her countenance changed when they spoke of money and the necessities of their master, yet ever on this point, Bruce, before his return, received a more favourable answer

¹ Printed for the first time from the Warrender MSS. The letter is dated Edinburgh, April 13, 1594. In an interesting volume, presented by Adam Anderson, Esq., Solicitor-General for Scotland, (an old and valued friend of the author,) to the Abbotsford Club, will be found, pp. 6, 7, James's letter of credential to his ambassadors, Bruce and Wemyss, with a letter from the king to the Earl of Essex, bespeaking his good offices.

than he had expected. She assured him that she would extend her liberality the moment the king set out on his expedition against the Catholic earls, and she saw that he was in earnest.¹ Colvile of Easter Wemyss, his brother ambassador, now proceeded to the court of France; whilst, about the same time, Sir William Keith was dispatched to the United Provinces; and Mr Peter Young, the king's almoner, to the court of Denmark. The object of all these missions was the same: to carry to the king's faithful and ancient allies the happy news of the birth of a prince; to invite them to send their representatives to the baptism, which had been fixed for the 15th of July; and to hint delicately to the United States, but in perfectly intelligible terms, the necessity of presenting, at that solemn ceremony, something more substantial than congratulations.²

Important events now crowded rapidly on each other. On the 30th of May the estates assembled; and as James's avowed determination to concentrate his whole strength against the Catholic earls had conciliated the Kirk and the English faction, all proceeded amicably and firmly. Huntley, Angus, and Errol, the three mighty leaders, who were now in open rebellion, were forfeited, stript of their estates, declared traitors,³ and a commission given to their avowed enemy, the young Earl of Argyle, to assemble the forces of the north, and pursue them with fire and sword. All persons detected in saying Mass, were ordered to be punished capitally, and their goods confiscated. It was resolved, for the preservation of the religion, and to confirm the amity between the two realms, that there

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr Edward Bruce to Lord Burghley, May 16, 1594.

² Warrender MS. Collections, vol. A. p. 109. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, April 13, 1594. Also, *ibid.*, same to same, April 21, 1594. Also, *ibid.*, original draft, Sir R. Cecil to Sir R. Bowes, May 17, 1594.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, May 30, 1594. *Ibid.*, same to same, June 9, 1594.

should be a thorough reformation in the king's council; and that Elizabeth's advice should be followed in such matters. The Catholic Countess of Huntley, whose intercourse with the king and queen had been a constant thorn in the side of the Kirk, was dismissed from court; Lord Hume recanted, and signed the Confession of Faith, either convinced in conscience, or terrified by impending severities; and the king declared, that immediately after the baptism, he would march in person, at the head of the whole strength of his dominions, against the Catholic insurgents.⁴

On the evening of the 27th August, the Earl of Sussex, a young nobleman of the highest rank, and connected by blood with his royal mistress, arrived at the Scottish court. He came from Elizabeth to stand her gossip, or representative, at the baptism of the young prince. He was attended by a noble retinue, and brought some rich presents from the Queen of England, with this brief letter of congratulation and counsel:—

"I make a note of my happy destiny, my good brother, in beholding my luck so fortunate as to be the baptizer of both father and son, so dear unto me; and [this] makes me frame my humble *orisons* to Him that all may,⁵ that He will please bless with all happiness the prosperous-continuance of both, in such a sort as my benedictions bestowed on either may be perfected through His omnipotent graces; and do promise a grant to my devotions, springing from a fountain of such good will. And pray you believe, that I never counsel or advise you aught whose first end tends not to your most good; and do conjure you, that receiving so assured knowledge of what your lewd lords [she alludes here to the Catholic earls] mean, that you neglect not God's good warning, to cause you timely shun the worst. All kings have not had so true espiars of their harm, but have felt it or they heard it; but

⁴ M.S. State-paper Office, Act of Secret Council, July 23, 1594.

⁵ To Him that can do all things.

I am best testimony of you to too many fortellers, in whom you never yet found guile.¹

"Thus will I end to trouble you with ragged lines; saving to request you bear with the youth of this noble earl, in whom, though his years may not promise him much, yet I hope his race and his good nature will afford your honourable regard, both for his parentage, and being of my blood, as coming from such a prince, of whom you may make surest account, to be assured such as you could wish, as God can best witness: to whom I pray you to grant you always victory of your evil subjects."²

When Sussex delivered his letter and presents, the king was in the highest bustle and good humour; engrossed not only with the many weighty concerns connected with his approaching "Rode," or military expedition, but devising sports and pastimes for the entertainment of his foreign guests the ambassadors, and planning, with the Lord of Lindores and Mr David Fowler, his masters of the revels, a variety of princely pageants, with "deep moral meanings;" one of which, the interlude of "Neptune," was the fruitful product of his majesty's own private brain. The expense incurred in these triumphs and shows, in which there was an unusual allowance of chariots, mimic ships, Christian knights, rural deities, Moors, windmills, and amazons, must have been excessive, judging from the account of a contemporary pamphlet, written in the highest style of quaint and courtly composition.³ The baptism itself took place on the 30th of

¹ Obscure. Probably, "But I, in whom you never yet found guile, am the best amongst many forewarners."

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, August 27, 1594. Also, Royal Letters, State-paper Office, Copy of her Majesty's Letter to the King of Scots.

³ State-paper Office. A rare pamphlet, entitled, "A True Report of the most Triumphant and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptism of the most Excellent, Right High and Mighty Prince, Frederick Henry, by the Grace of God, Prince of Scotland, solemnized August 30, 1594." Printed by Peter Short, for the Widow Butter. To be sold at her shop under St Austin's Church.

August, in the Royal chapel at Stirling castle. The infant prince was carried by Sussex, Elizabeth's ambassador. He was christened by Cunningham, bishop of Aberdeen, by the name of Frederick Henry, Henry Frederick; and when the solemn ceremony was concluded, and the king, the ambassadors and nobles, with the queen and her ladies of honour, retired from the chapel to the hall of state, "the cannons of the castle roared, so that therewith the earth trembled; and other smaller shot," says one of the city orators of the time, "made their harmony after their kind." The infant was then knighted by his royal father, "touched with the spur" by the Earl of Mar; and being crowned with a ducal coronet, richly set with diamonds, sapphires, and other precious stones, Lion King of Arms proclaimed his titles as "The Right Excellent, High, and Magnanimous Frederick Henry, Henry Frederick, by the Grace of God, Knight and Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, Earl of Carrick, Duke of Rothesay, Prince and Great Steward of Scotland." The pageants succeeded; but their details would only fatigue. It is amusing to find that the king himself did not disdain to take a part, appalled at all points as a Christian Knight of Malta; whilst a worshipful baron, the Lord of Buccleuch, with Lord Lindores and the Abbot of Holyrood, in women's attire and gallantly mounted, enacted three amazons. The ceremony being concluded, and the voice of revelry hushed in the palace, the Earl of Sussex, after a few days, took leave, bearing with him this letter from the king to his royal mistress. It is wholly written in James's hand:

"I could not permit, madam and dearest sister, now after the ending of this solemn time, the nobleman bearer hereof to depart without returning with him unto you my most hearty thanks for the honouring me with so noble a substitute *gossip* in your place. And where ye excuse his youth, surely he was the fitter for a young king and feasting days. But I cannot aneuch⁴

⁴ Aneuch, Scottish for enough.

commend unto you his extreme diligence in coming, and courteous and mild behaviour here; which moves me to request you to cherish so noble a youth, now after his first employment.

"As for the other part of his commission and your letter, which concerns the Spanish lords here, ye can be no earnerster now in that matter than I am, who has now renounced any further dealing with them but by extremity; and presently have I vowed myself only to that errand, and never to take rest until I put some end thereto. And suppose ye may justly accuse (as ever ye do) my deferring so long to put order unto them; yet according to an old proverb, *it is better late thrive than never*; and surely I will think my fault the more excusable if the example thereof make you to eschew the falling in the like error, in making your assistance not to come as far behind the time as my prosecution does. But in this I remit you to your own wisdom; for you are not ignorant how occasion is painted. And now I cannot omit to lay before you some incident griefs of mine; but lest I weary you too much with my ragged handwrit, I remit the particulars hereof to the report of this nobleman, only touching thus far by the way. I think ye have not given commission to any of your council to treat with Bothwell's ambassador, nor yet allow that his agent, and one guilty of all his treasons, should use his public devotion in the French Kirk, in presence of my ambassador; who, indeed, was better furnished with patience at the sight thereof than he is likely to get thanks for at my hands: yet now, madam, none can brook me and Bothwell both. Examine secretly your councillors, and suffer them not to behave themselves more to your dis honour than my discontentment. Only *honestum utile est, præcipue regibus*; and if James Forret or any other *Bothwellist* be at present within your country, I crave, by these presents, delivery according to the treaties, your many hand-written promises, and my good deserts by O'Rorick. And thus not

doubting, as it hath been your fortune to be godmother both to me and my son, so ye will be a *good mother* to us both, I commit you, madam and dearest sister, to the protection of the Almighty."

For these suspicions of James there was too much ground; as it is certain that Sir Robert Cecil, who, on account of the increasing infirmities of his father Lord Burghley, now managed the Scottish affairs, had secret intelligence with Bothwell. The Catholic earls were now alluring this audacious man, by Spanish gold, to make common cause with them against the Scottish king. Bothwell, on the other hand, with consummate baseness, had proposed to Cecil to accept the money and betray their secrets to the Queen of England, if she would still stand his friend in his present distress and misery. But he was no longer the proud and powerful partisan whom Elizabeth had once so highly favoured; and the moment she discovered that James had detected his intrigues, she threw him from her with as much indifference as she would a broken sword; commanded him to leave her dominions; and interdicted her subjects, under the severest penalties, from giving him harbour or assistance. He was no longer permitted, in the strong language which the king himself used in his remonstrance to Sussex, to "tak muster, display cornet or ensign, blaw trumpet, strike drum," or even in any way live and breathe within England.²

Having secured this expulsion of his mortal enemy, James assembled a convention at Stirling,³ and made the most active preparations for the attack of the Catholic earls. On both sides a violent and determined struggle was anticipated; as there were many

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Royal Letters, James to Elizabeth, September 11, 1594, Holyrood. Printed for the first time.

² Ibid., Mr John Colville to Sir R. Cecil, whom he addresses as "his honourable Lord and Mæcenas," July 31, 1594. Also ibid., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, August 3, 1594. Also ibid., Royal Letters, "The effect of the King of Scots' Speech to the Earl of Sussex," 1594.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Earl of Sussex to Sir R. Cecil, September 8, 1594.

deep feelings and bitter passions which festered in the minds of the leaders and their hosts. With the Kirk, it was a war of religious persecution, or rather extermination. Their avowed object was to depose *antichrist*, and to compel all Catholics to recant, or at once give up their lands, their honours, and their country, for their privilege to adhere to that Church which they believed to be of divine origin and the only depository of the truth. But to these feelings were added, as may be easily imagined, many motives and passions of baser alloy: ambition, love of plunder, deep feudal hatred, long-delayed and fondly-cherished hopes of revenge; and all that catalogue of dark and merciless passions which spring from the right of private war and the prevalence of family feuds. These all raged in the bosoms of the opposed leaders and combatants; and the exacerbation they produced was shewn alike by the energy of their preparations and the cruelty with which they fought. Huntly, Angus, Errol, and Auchendown, since their refusal of the act of abolition,¹ had been gathering their strength, and were now busily engaged in levying recruits, partly at their own charges, partly with Spanish gold, of which they had received repeated supplies. It had been now for many years the practice of Elizabeth, with the permission of James, to employ large bodies of Scottish auxiliaries in her wars in the Low Countries. Scottish troops, also, often served in Ireland; and the Highland chiefs had long driven a lucrative and warlike commerce with that country, selling their services to the highest bidder, and carrying over large bodies of pikemen, bowmen, and even of hagbutteers, to the assistance of Elizabeth or her enemies, as it best suited their interest. From these causes, there were now in Scotland many experienced officers and numerous bands of mercenaries, ready, like the Italian *Condottieri*, or the Swiss bands, to offer their service wherever they heard the tuck of drum or the clink of gold;

¹ *Supra*, p. 210.

and as Huntly had high reputation as a military leader, lived in almost regal splendour in his palace at Strathbogie, and was young, generous, and brave, the Catholic camp was in no want of recruits, and soon assumed a formidable appearance. He was now also joined by Bothwell, who, driven to desperation by the mortal hatred of the Scottish king; his recent proscription by the Queen of England; his desertion by the Kirk, who had detected his dealings with the Catholics; and the hunting down, torturing, and execution of his poor vassals, had been unable to resist the bribes held out to him. The papers still exist which enable us to trace the last struggles and plots of this desperate man; but we can only give them a passing glance. It was arranged between him and his new associates, that when Huntly was engaged in the north, Bothwell should make a diversion in the south; thus distracting the king and dividing his forces. But this was not all. He entered into an agreement with his new friends, in which it was proposed, by a sudden *coup de main*, to attack the court, imprison the king, seize the infant prince, murder Sir George Hume the king's favourite; and, as he himself expressed it in his letter to the ministers of the Kirk, "put in practice the loveable custom of their progenitors at Lauder," by completely revolutionising the government.² It was asserted, and on good grounds, that the usual "Band," or feudal agreement in such conspiracies, was drawn up and signed by the *enterprisers*; but the time for its execution was not fixed; and the seizure of some of the inferior agents, with the course of events in the north, happily rendered the whole plot abortive.

These events were of a stirring and romantic kind; for, on the 21st September, Argyle, having received the royal commission to pursue Huntly and his associates, set out on his expedition at the head of a force of six thousand men. Of this army, three

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwell to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, September 7, 1594.

thousand only were chosen men, bearing harquebuses, bows, and pikes; the rest being more slenderly equipt, both as to body-armour and weapons. Of cavalry, he had few or none; but he expected to be joined by Lord Forbes, with the Laird of Towey, the Dunbars, and other barons, who, it was hoped, would form a strong reinforcement, and be mostly mounted.¹ It had been the king's intention to postpone the attack upon the insurgent barons till he had assembled the whole force of his realm, and was ready to take the command in person. But the ministers of the Kirk urged the danger of delay: some of them even buckled on their broadswords and rode to the camp; whilst Argyle himself, young, (he was only nineteen,) ardent, and acting under the stimulus of personal revenge, determined on instant action. He had already, he said, been twice on the eve of marching, and twice been countermanded; but now the slaughter of his brother-in-law, the Earl of Moray, should be avenged on Huntly; to whom he sent a message that, within three days, he meant to sleep at Strathbogie. To this taunting challenge Huntly replied, that Argyle should be welcome: he would himself be his porter, and open all the gates of his palace to his young friend; but he must not take it amiss if he rubbed his cloak against Argyle's plaid ere they parted.²

On advancing to Aberdeen, Argyle ordered Red Lion, the herald, to proclaim the royal commission by sound of trumpet in the market-place, and appointed Sir Lauchlan Maclean of Duart to the chief command under himself. He was joined by the Macintoshes, the Grants, the Clan Gregor, the Macgillivrays, with all their friends and dependants, and by the whole surname of the Campbells; with many others, whom either greediness of prey or malice against the Gordons had thrust into that expedition. These,

including the rabble of camp-followers, or, as Bowes terms them, "*rascals and poke-bearers*," formed a body of ten thousand strong. But of this number only six thousand were fighting men; and out of these there were not above fifteen hundred disciplined harquebusiers, chiefly serving under Maclean; the rest being promiscuously armed with dirks, swords, dags, Lochaber axes, two-handed swords, and bows and arrows. He had neither cavalry nor artillery; and a large part of his force was totally regardless of discipline, disdaining command, composed of chieftains and people distracted by old feuds and suspicions, marching, as described by an eye-witness, "at raggle and in plumps, without order." The earl had also along with him a noted sorceress, whose incantations, in the superstitious spirit of the times, were expected to bring to light the treasures which might be hid underground by the terrified inhabitants.³ With this army Argyle proceeded into Badenoch, and besieged the castle of Ruthven, belonging to Huntly; but the place was bravely defended by the Macphersons. He had no means of battering the walls; and abandoning the siege, he led his troops through the hills to Strathbogie. It was his purpose to ravage this country, which belonged to Huntly, with fire and sword; and thence come down into the Lowlands to form a junction with Lord Forbes, who, with his own kin and the Frasers, Dunbars, Ogilvies, Leslies, and others, were at that moment on their way to meet him. With this object, he arrived on the 2d of October at Drimmin in Strathdown, where he encamped;⁴ and soon after received news that Huntly and Errol were in the neighbourhood, and proposed to attack him, in spite of their great inferiority in force. The disparity was indeed great; for the Catholic earls could not muster above fifteen hundred, or, at most, two thousand men. But of these the greater part were resolute and gallant gentle-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, September 27, 1594.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, September 28, 1594. Historie of James the Sext, p. 339.

³ Napier's Life of Napier of Merchiston, p. 217.

⁴ Warrender MSS., vol. B. p. 9.

men, all well mounted and fully armed; and amongst them some officers of veteran experience, who had served in the Low Countries. They had, besides, six pieces of ordnance, which were placed under the charge of Captain Andrew Gray, who afterwards commanded the English and Scottish auxiliaries in Bohemia.¹

On the morning of the 3d of October, Huntly, who had marched from Strathbogie to Auchendown, the castle of Sir Patrick Gordon, having received word by his scouts that Argyle was at no great distance, sent Captain Thomas Kerr, a veteran officer, at the head of a small body of cavalry, to view the enemy and report their strength. In executing this, he fell in with Argyle's "spials," and slew them all except one, who brought him to the vicinity of their encampment, which was near Glenlivat, in the mountainous district of Strathavon. On his return, Captain Kerr concealed the number of their opponents, affirming that a few resolute men might easily have the advantage; and Huntly, following his advice, instantly marched forward. Errol led the advance, supported by Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, the Lairds of Gicht, Bonniton Wood, and Captain Kerr and three hundred gentlemen. Huntly commanded the rearward, having on his right the Laird of Clunie-Gordon, on his left Gordon of Abergeldie, and the six pieces of artillery so placed as to be completely masked, or covered, by the cavalry, so that they were dragged forward unperceived within range of the enemy's position. They then opened their fire; and on the first discharge, which was directed at the yellow standard of Argyle, struck down and slew Macneill, the Laird of Barra's third son, one of their bravest officers, and Campbell of Lochmell, who held the standard. This successful commencement occasioned extraordinary confusion amongst the Highlanders, to many of whom the terrible effects of artillery

were even at this late day unknown; and a large body of them, yelling and brandishing their broadswords and axes, made some ineffectual attempts to reach the horsemen; but receiving another fire from the little ordnance-train of Captain Gray, they took to flight, and in an incredibly short time were out of sight and pursuit. Still, however, a large body remained; and Argyle had the advantage not only of the sun, then shining fiercely in the eyes of his opponents, glancing on their steel coats and making the plain appear on fire, but of the ground: for his army were arrayed on the top of a steep hill covered with high heather and stones, whilst the ground at the bottom was soft and mossy, full of holes, called in that country peat-pots, and dangerous for cavalry. But all this did not deter Huntly's vanguard, under Errol and Auchendown, from advancing resolutely to the attack. Errol, however, dreading the marsh, made an oblique movement by some firmer ground which lay on one side, and hoped thus to turn the flank of the enemy; but Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, urged on by his fiery temper, spurred his horse directly towards the hill, and getting entangled with his men in the mossy ground, was exposed to a murderous fire from the force under Maclean of Duart. This chieftain was conspicuous from his great stature and strength; he was covered with a shirt of mail, wielded a double-edged Danish battle-axe, and appears to have been a more experienced officer than the rest; as he placed his men, who were mostly "harquebusiers," in a small copse-wood hard by, from which they could deliver their fire, and be screened from the attack of cavalry. Auchendown, nevertheless, although his ranks were dreadfully thinned by this fire of the enemy's infantry, managed to disengage them, and spurring up the hill, received a bullet in the body, and fell from his horse; whilst his companions shouted with grief and rage, and made desperate efforts to rescue him. The Highlanders, however, who knew him well, rushed in upon him,

¹ Warrender MSS., vol. B. p. 9. In which there is a minute contemporary account of the battle of Glenlivat.

dispatched him with their dirks, and, cutting off his head, displayed it in savage triumph: a sight which so enraged the Gordons, that they fought with a fury which alike disregarded discipline and life. This gave an advantage to Maclean, who, enclosing the enemy's vanguard, and pressing it into narrow space between his own force and Argyle's, would have cut them to pieces had not Huntly come speedily to their support and renewed the battle; attacking both Argyle and Maclean with desperate energy, and calling loudly to his friends to revenge Auchendown. It was at this moment that some of the Gordons caught a sight of Fraser, the king's herald, who rode beside Argyle, and was dressed in his tabard, with the red lion embroidered on it, within the double treasure. This ought to have been his protection; but it seemed rather to point him out as a victim: and the horsemen shouting out, "Have at the Lion," ran him through with their spears, and slew him on the spot. The battle was now at its height, and raged for two hours with the utmost cruelty. Errol was severely wounded with a bullet in the arm, and by one of the sharp-barbed arrows of the Highland bowmen, which pierced deep into the thigh. He lost his pennon or guidon also; which was won by Maclean. Gordon of Giecht was struck with three bullets through the body, and had two plaits of his steel coat carried into him; wounds which next day proved mortal. Huntly himself was in imminent danger of his life; for his horse was shot under him, and the Highlanders were about to attack him on the ground with their knives and axes, when he was extricated and horsed again by Innermarkie; after which he again charged the enemy under Argyle, whose troops wavered, and at last began to fly in such numbers that only twenty men were left round him. Upon this the young chief, overcome with grief and vexation at so disgraceful a desertion, shed tears of rage, and would have still renewed the fight, had not Murray of Tullibardine seized his bridle and

forced him off the field. Seeing the day lost, Maclean, who had done most and suffered least in this cruel fight, withdrew his men from the wood, and retired in good order; but seven hundred Highlanders were slain in the chase, which was continued till the steepness of the mountains rendered further pursuit impossible. Such was the celebrated battle of Glenlivat. The loss on Huntly's side was mostly of gentlemen, of whom Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, his uncle, "a wise, valiant, and resolute knight," was chiefly lamented. Besides him, twenty other gentlemen were slain, and some forty or fifty wounded; but the victory was complete, and recalled to memory the bloody fight of Harlaw, in 1411, between the Earl of Mar and Donald Balloch; in which, under somewhat similar circumstances, the superior armour and discipline of the Lowland knights proved too strong for the ferocious but irregular efforts of a much larger force of Highlanders.¹

During these transactions, the king, unconscious of this reverse, had left his palace at Stirling, and advanced with his army to Dundee, where Argyle, in person, brought him the news of his own defeat. James, however, was more enraged than dismayed by this intelligence. He had left his capital so well defended² that he dreaded nothing from Bothwell. He knew that, from the exhausted state of the country, it would be impossible for Huntly to keep his forces together; and he swore that the death of a royal herald, who had been murdered with the king's coat on, should be avenged on these audacious rebels. Nor did he fail to keep his promise. In spite of the severity of the season, he advanced with his army to Aberdeen, attended by Andrew Melvil and a body of the ministers of the Kirk, who, with the feeling that this was a

¹ The above account of the battle of Glenlivat is taken chiefly from the original letters of Bowes, who was on the spot.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, October 3. Ibid., October 8. Ibid., October 12, 1594.

crusade against the infidels, had joined the camp, and loudly applauded the meditated vengeance of the monarch.¹ He thence pushed on to Strathbogie. This noble residence of Huntly,² which had been fourteen years in building, was blown up with gunpowder, and levelled in two days, nothing being left but the great old tower, whose massive masonry defied the efforts of the pioneers; whilst its master, deserted by his barons and dependants, fled into the mountainous parts of Caithness.³ James had been much incensed against him by the scornful contents of an intercepted letter written to Angus, in which Huntly spoke of the king's rumoured campaign as likely to turn out a "*gowk's storm.*"⁴ Slaines in Buchan, the principal castle of Errol, who still lay languishing from his wounds; Culsamond in Garroch, the house of the Laird of Newton-Gordon; Bagays and Craig in Angus, the castles of Sir Walter Lindsay and Sir John Ogilvy, successively shared the fate of Strathbogie. Indeed, there is little doubt that the royal severity, whetted by the exhortations of Andrew Melvil, who bore a pike and joined the soldiers in the destruction of Strathbogie, would have fallen still heavier on this devoted district, had not famine, and the remonstrances of Thirlstane and Glammis, compelled the king to fall back upon Aberdeen.⁵ Here, after the execution of some of Huntly's men, he published a general pardon to all the commons

who had been in the field at the battle of Glenlivat, upon their payment of the fines imposed by the council.⁶ He then appointed the Duke of Lennox to be his lieutenant or representative in the north, assisted by a council of barons and ministers. Amongst the civilians were the Earl Marshal, Lord Forbes, Sir Robert Melvil, and Sir John Carmichael, with the Lairds of Dunipace, Findlater, and Balquhan; whilst of the ministry, were Mr David Lindsay, Mr James Nicolson, Mr Peter Blackburn, Mr Alexander Douglas, and Mr Duncan Davison. A charge was next given to the barons and gentlemen who resided north of the river Dee, to apprehend all the rebels within their boundaries; and although in the greatest possible distress for money to pay his troops, the king, who trusted to the solemn promises of Elizabeth, made an effort to keep them together, and left behind him a body of two hundred horse, and one hundred foot, under the command of Sir John Carmichael. These were ordered to assist the Duke of Lennox, whose residence was to be in Aberdeen, Elgin, or Inverness, until Argyle, who had been appointed by James to the permanent government of the north, should assemble his friends and relieve him of his charge. Meanwhile, the Duke was empowered to hold Justice Ayres, or courts for the punishment of offenders; and the barons and gentlemen of the north bound themselves, before the king's departure, in strict promises of support.⁷ Having completed these judicious arrangements, the monarch disbanded his forces, and returned to Stirling on the 14th November.⁸

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, October 23, 1594.

² Ibid., B.C., Carey to Sir R. Cecil, November 18, 1594. "The castle and palace of Strathbogie clean cast down and brent." Also, ibid., Occurrents, Oct. 29, 1594.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, October 29, 1594. Ibid. MS., State-paper Office, Occurrents, October 28 and 29.

⁴ "Gowk" is the Scottish word for the "Cuckoo." An April storm.

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, November 3, 1594, Occurrents certified from Aberdeen.

⁶ MS., State-paper Office, Occurrents, November 3, 1594.

⁷ MS Books of the Privy Council of Scotland, November 7, 1594. MS., State-paper Office, Occurrents sent from Aberdeen, November 8, 1594.

⁸ MS., State-paper Office, Abstract of Letters from Edinburgh, November 16, 1594.

CHAPTER IX.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1594—1597.

JAMES had now fulfilled all his promises to Elizabeth; and by the severity with which he had put down the rebellion of the Catholic earls, had more than fulfilled the expectations of the Kirk. The castles and houses which were said to have been polluted by the Mass, were smoking and in ruins;¹ the noblemen and gentry, whose only petition had been that they should be permitted to retain their estates, and have their rents transmitted to them in the banishment which they had chosen rather than renounce the faith of their fathers, were fugitives and wanderers, hiding in the caves and forests, and dreading every hour to be betrayed into the hands of their enemies.² All this had been accomplished at no little personal risk, for the king was surrounded by perpetual plots against his liberty, and sometimes even against his life.³ He had cheerfully undergone great privations, had impoverished his revenue, incurred heavy debts, and imposed burdens upon his subjects, that he might, by one great effort, extinguish the Catholic faith, destroy the hopes and intrigues of Spain, and relieve the Queen of England from all her fears. He had done this, trusting to her promises of that pecuniary aid which was absolutely necessary for the payment of his troops; and before he set out, had dispatched his secretary, Sir Robert Cockburn, to the English court,⁴ with the perfect confidence that everything which had

been undertaken by "his good sister" would be fulfilled.

In this, however, he was miserably disappointed. Whilst the king was engaged in burning and razing the houses of the Catholics, Elizabeth and the now venerable Burghley were closeted at Greenwich, laying their heads together to find out some plausible excuse for stopping the payment of the promised supplies. Cockburn, the ambassador, was artfully detained and delayed from week to week, and month to month, till the result of the campaign could be guessed with some certainty. When this was ascertained, the sum of two thousand pounds, for which an order had been given, was recalled;⁵ and a paper was drawn up by Lord Burghley, detailing the sums paid by England to James since the year 1586, and proving, to the perfect satisfaction of Elizabeth, if not of James, that instead of any money being then due to the King of Scotland, he had been overpaid to the extent of six thousand five hundred pounds.⁶ This, the queen added, was at the rate of three thousand pounds a-year; which James could hardly complain of, as it was the exact allowance given both to her sister Mary and herself by their father Henry the Eighth; and yet the Scottish king now pretended that she had promised an annuity of four thousand pounds, which she positively denied.

For this unwise and double conduct in the queen there could be no defence. She had first excited James

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, Sept. 28, 1594.

² MS., State-paper Office, Bowes, Oct. 29, 1594.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 7, 1594. Also, *ibid.*, Occurrents, November 8, 1594, and November 16, 1594.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Cockburn to Sir R. Cecil, Sept. 16, 1594.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, Oct. 23, 1594.

⁶ *Ibid.*, B.C., Scottish Payments, Nov. 5, 1594. The endorsement is in Burghley's hand.

to this northern expedition by flattery and large promises of support; she now forgot all, and deserted him without scruple or remorse. Such a mode of proceeding roused his passion to a pitch of unusual fury: and when Sir R. Cockburn returned, the storm broke pitilessly on his head. The king at the same time expressed, in no moderate terms, his rage and suspicion against Burghley and Sir Robert Cecil, by whose advice Elizabeth had acted; and some busy courtiers blew the coals, by assuring him that both father and son were involved in the intrigues and treasons of Bothwell. Had the queen kept her promises, (so he said,) had she not thrown to the winds her solemn assurances made him by her ambassadors, Lord Burgh and Lord Zouch, the land would have been utterly purged of the enemies to God, religion, and both the countries. But now matters might proceed as they pleased. If the enemy revived: if they began again to look confidently for Spanish money, and Spanish messengers; if recruits were raised in the Isles to assist the Catholics and O'Neill in Ireland; if the rebel earls and Bothwell had met together as they were reported to have done; if, in his own council plots were being carried on in favour of the Catholics, and his own life were not safe from the efforts of desperate men, who had conspired to set up the young prince and pull him from his royal seat; all these manifold dangers and miseries were to be ascribed most justly to his desertion by Elizabeth. He had performed his part, and more than redeemed all the pledges which he had given. She had not only failed in all her promises, but now had the hardihood to disavow them, and she might take the consequences. If he was himself compelled to look to other friendships, and accept of other offers of assistance contrary to his own wishes; if the members of his council, who were inclined to the Catholic side, had now more to say than before; if at the moment when Spanish intrigues were about to be extinguished for ever, he was arrested in his course; all was her fault, not

his.¹ He must now strengthen himself as he best could, and place no more implicit reliance upon English promises.

It was impossible to deny the justice of these complaints; and although for the moment all was quiet in the north under the government of the Duke of Lennox, there were many subjects for anxiety. The king's debts were enormous, and more money still was imperiously required to pay his troops and retain the advantages he had acquired. His late severities to the Catholic earls, and his alliance with the Kirk, the ministers of which now lauded as highly as they had vituperated him, had lost him the friendship of all his foreign allies, and of the influential body of the English Catholics; and within his own court and council there were so many rivalries and jealousies, so much plotting and intriguing, that, on his return, he found the campaign in the north almost less irksome than the civil battles he had to fight in his own palace. The great struggle was between the Lord Chancellor Maitland and the Earl of Mar. Maitland's faction was strong, embracing Hamilton, Athole, Hume, Buccleuch, Ogilvy, and many others. Mar, on the other hand, had the keeping of the prince, commanded the castles of Stirling and Edinburgh, and enjoyed the complete confidence of the king, who had become somewhat suspicious and impatient under the grasping and increasing power of the chancellor.

But James had another and nearer source of anxiety in the queen, who was equally the enemy of Mar and Maitland. This princess, for a considerable period after her marriage, appears to have shunned all interference with party or public affairs; but she was jealous of Maitland, who had opposed her marriage, and was said to have secretly attacked her honour; and of Mar, because her son, the young heir to the throne, had been committed in charge to him rather

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Cockburn to Sir R. Bowes, December 12, 1594.

than to her. Besides, she and the king, though outwardly living on fair and decent terms, were neither loving nor confidential. James's cold temperament and coarse jokes disgusted the queen, who was not insensible to admiration; and she consoled herself, for the desertion of her lord, in the more attractive society of the young Duke of Lennox, the noblest of the Scottish courtiers. This, on the other hand, roused the royal jealousy; and about the time of the christening Mr John Colvile assured Sir Robert Cecil, whom he calls his most honourable lord and Mæcenas, that matters were on a very miserable footing. He writes as follows:—

"These few lines I thought meet only to put in your hands, to go no farther but to her majesty, and your most honourable father, my special good lord. It is certain that the king has conceived a great jealousy of the queen, which burns the more the more he covers it. The duke is the principal suspected. The chancellor casts in materials to this fire. The queen is forewarned; but with the like cunning will not excuse, till she be accused. '*Haec sunt incendia malorum;*' and the end can be no less tragical nor was betwixt his parents. The president of the Session, called the Prior of Pluscardine, is by her indirectly stirred up to counterpoise the chancellor, who she blames of all these slanders; and the chancellor is indirectly supported by the other; both the princes holding the Wolf by the ears."¹ We know also, from a letter of Mr James Murray, a gentleman of the bedchamber, that about this time a plot had been laid for the "disgrace of the queen and the Duke of Lennox; and to so bitter and mortal an excess had the king's fears and jealousy proceeded shortly before the baptism, that he had doubts as to the paternity of Prince Henry."² On the 30th

of July, a month before the baptism, Colvile wrote thus to Sir R. Cecil: The "king repents him sore that he has made such convention to this baptism; for upon the jealousy mentioned in my last he begins to doubt of the child. I think he had not been baptised at this time if so many princes had not been invited. That matter takes deep root upon both sides.

Nocte dieque suos gestant in pectore fastus,
Incautos perdet tacita flamma duos."

It is possible that all this may have been much exaggerated by Colvile, and that Bothwell's gossip to the Dean of Durham, Toby Mathews, of the king's love for the beautiful daughter of the Earl of Morton, may have been equally highly coloured; but there can be little doubt that James and his royal consort were not on comfortable terms; and it seems certain that the queen, about this time, not only placed herself at the head of a faction which numbered in its ranks some of the most powerful nobles, but began to have considerable weight both in the court and with the country.

In the north, also, everything was in commotion; for although Lennox had, for a brief season, succeeded in restoring tranquillity, by the vigour with which he had executed the charge committed to him, all became again disordered on his retirement from office. The great cause of these excesses was to be traced to some extraordinary discoveries made at this time by the young Earl of Argyle, which showed that treachery, not cowardice, had been the cause of his defeat at Glenlivat. It was found out, by the confessions of some accomplices, that Campbell of Lochneil, the near relative of the young chief, and, failing an only brother, the heir to his estates and honours, had been tampering with Huntly; and that the flight of so large a body of Highlanders was only part of a conspiracy against the life of Argyle. It was discovered, also, by evidence which could not be contradicted, that this foul plot against the

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Colvile to Sir R. Cecil, July 26, 1594. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr James Murray to "Faithful Gawane," August 16, 1594.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, James Murray to his Faithful Gawane, August 16,

1594; and *ibid.*, Mr John Colvile to Sir R. Cecil.

young earl was intimately connected with the late murder of the Earl of Moray and the assassination of the Laird of Calder; that all were branches of one great conspiracy, of which a chief contriver was Maitland the chancellor, assisted by Huntly, Duncan Campbell of Glenurquhy, Archibald Campbell of Lochnell, Sir James Campbell of Ardkinglass, Macaulay of Ardincaple, and John Lord Maxwell. These titled and official ruffians, in the spirit of the times, which could combine the strictest legal precision with the utmost familiarity with blood, had drawn up a *band*, by which, in the most solemn manner, they became mutually bound to each other to achieve the murder of James earl of Moray, Archibald earl of Argyle, Colin Campbell of Lundy, his only brother, and John Campbell of Calder. The result was to be, the possession of the earldom of Argyle by Lochnell, and the appropriation of a large part of its princely estates by the Chancellor Maitland and the other conspirators. With the success of one part of this conspiracy, the cruel murder of the Earl of Moray, we are already acquainted;¹ and in the case of the Laird of Calder they were also successful: for this unfortunate gentleman was about this time shot at night, through the window of his own house in Lorn, by an assassin named M'Kellar, who had been furnished with a hagbut by Ardkinglass, which, to make surer work, he had loaded with three bullets. So far this diabolical plot was followed out with success. But at this crisis, the remorse or interest of Ardkinglass revealed the conspiracy to Argyle; and the apprehension, torture, and confession of John Oig Campbell and M'Kellar, who were executed, led, at last, to the revelation of the "Great Contract," as it was called. The "band" itself fell into the hands of Argyle, and convinced him that the assassination of his unhappy friends, Moray and Calder, was to have been followed, on the first good opportunity that should present itself, by the murder of himself. Of

all this the consequences were dreadful. Argyle hurried to the north, assembled his vassals, and proclaimed a war of extermination against Huntly, and all who had opposed or deserted him at Glenlivat.² Huntly, on the other hand, having by this time somewhat recovered his recent losses, was once more in the field, and threatened to hang up any retainer of his, high or low, who dared to pay the fines levied on him, or sought for peace in obedience to the laws.³ Mar, a nobleman very powerful in the north as well as the south, joined with Argyle; whilst Huntly had many friends at court, who secretly screened him in his excesses. The ministers of the Kirk, in the meantime, sounded their terrible trumpet of warning to all true men, denouncing from the pulpit the reviving influence of the Catholics; and large bodies of soldiers, disbanded for want of pay, roamed over the country, and committed every sort of robbery and excess. Ministers of religion were murdered; fathers slain by their own sons; brothers by their brethren; married women ravished under their own roof; houses, with their miserable inmates, burned amidst savage mirth; and the land so utterly wasted by fire, plunder, and the total cessation of agricultural labour, that famine at last stalked in to complete the horrid picture, and destroy, by the most terrible of deaths, those who had escaped the sword.⁴

Amidst these dreadful excesses, the only support of the country was in the energy of the king: for his council was torn by faction, and some of the chief dignitaries were the offenders. But although deserted by Elizabeth, and compelled to disband his troops, and relax his military efforts against the Catholics, James assem-

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes' Advertisements, sent him from Edinburgh, January 5, 1594-5. Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, pp. 244, 250, 251, 253.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Advertisements by letters from Edinburgh, January 15, 1594-5.

⁴ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Aylcough, 4738, p. 1183.

bled a convention of his nobles; and evinced not only a sympathy for the sufferings of the people, but his resolution to make the utmost efforts to remove them.¹ Finding it impossible to reduce the northern districts to order without vigorous proceedings against the chiefs, he committed Athole, Lovat, and M'Kenzie, to ward at Linlithgow; imprisoned Argyle, Glenurchy, and others, in Edinburgh Castle; and confined Tullibardine, Grantully, and their fierce adherents, in Dumbarton and Blackness: to remain in this durance till they had made redress for the horrid excesses committed by their clansmen and supporters, and had come under an obligation to restore order to the country.² As to the Catholic earls, and Bothwell their associate, both parties, now nearly desperate of any ultimate success, and driven by the active pursuit of the king from one concealment to another, were anxious to reach the sea-coast and escape to the Continent. Bothwell especially, that once proud and potent baron, who had been the correspondent of Elizabeth, the friend of Burghley, the pillar of the Kirk, the arbiter of the court, and the idol of the people, was reduced to the lowest extremity. He had been expelled from all his castles and houses; and now the Hermitage, his last and strongest den, was in the hands of Hume, his mortal enemy.³ Scott, the Laird of Balwearie, one of his chief friends, who was acquainted with the secrets of his recent conspiracy with the Catholic earls, was seized, and purchased his life by a full revelation of the plot. His brother, Hercules Stewart, suffered on the scaffold; and the Kirk branded him with excommunication. William Hume, the brother of Davy the Devil, or David Hume of Manderston, whom Bothwell had slain, was employed to trace the fugitive from cover to cover; and executing this service with a scent sharpened by

revenge, he ran him through Caithness to the sea-coast; from which, after various windings and doublings, he escaped to France.⁴

Meanwhile, Huntly and Errol lingered in Scotland, with a last hope that assistance in money and in troops was on the eve of arriving from Spain; but this prospect was utterly blasted by a disaster which befell their messenger, Mr John Morton, a Jesuit, brother to the Laird of Cambo, who had been intrusted with a secret mission by the King of Spain and the Pope. This person had taken his passage in a Dutch ship, and was landed at Leith; but the disguise under which he travelled had not concealed him from a fellow passenger, a son of Erskine of Dun, who hinted his suspicion to Mr David Lindsay; and this active minister of the Kirk instantly pounced upon Father Morton, as he was called, who, in the struggle with the officers of justice, tore his secret instructions with his teeth.⁵ The fragments, however, were picked up, joined together, their contents deciphered, and the king, who piqued himself upon his shrewdness in cross-examination, exerted his powers with much success. He brought Morton to confess that he was a Jesuit, though he appeared only a Scottish gentlemen seeking his native air for the recovery of his health; that he was confessor to the Seminary College in Rome, and sent into Scotland by the Pope, and with special messages from Cardinal Cajetano and Fathers Crichton and Tyrie to Mr James Gordon, Huntly's near relative. The messenger added, that he was directed to reprove the Catholic lords for their disposal of the treasure lately sent, which had been given not to Catholics, but to courtiers who were heretics; as well as for their

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, George Nicolson to Burghley, January 29, 1594-5.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, George Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, January 30, 1594-5.

³ Ibid., October 24, 1594.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, February 19, 1594-5. Same to same, March 3, 1594-5. Also ibid., same to same, February 22, 1594-5. Also ibid., Mr Colvile to Sir R. Cecil, March 19, 1594-5. Also ibid., Mr John Colvile, February 22, 1594-5. Historie of James the Sixth, p. 344.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Colvile to S., March 25, 1595.

rashness in "detating" the king to be a Catholic, before the Spanish army destined for Scotland was in readiness. Their union with Bothwell, by which they had greatly exasperated the king, was also condemned by the Pope; and no hope of further treasure held out till they had vindicated themselves before the councillors of the King of Spain in the Low Countries. On Morton's person was found a small jewel or tablet, containing an exquisite representation of the Passion of our Lord, carved minutely in ivory; a present, as he said, from Cardinal Cajetano to the Scottish queen. This James, taking up, asked him to what use he put it. "To remind me," said Morton, "when I gaze on it and kiss it, of my Lord's Passion. Look, my liege," he continued, "how livelily the Saviour is here seen hanging between the two thieves, whilst below, the Roman soldier is piercing His sacred side with the lance. Ah, that I could prevail on my sovereign but once to kiss it before he lays it down!" "No," said James; "the Word of God is enough to remind me of the crucifixion; and besides, this carving of yours is so exceeding small, that I could not kiss Christ without kissing both the thieves and the executioners."¹

The ministers of the Kirk insisted that this unhappy person should be subjected to the torture of the boots, as the only means of obtaining a full confession; but he was saved from this dreadful suffering by his simplicity, and the candour with which he disclosed to the king all the objects of his mission.²

This last blow fell heavily on the party. It convinced Huntly and Errol, that for the present their cause was desperate, and that to retire into

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Colvile to S₃, March 25, 1595. Also ibid., Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, March 25, 1595. Also ibid., April 5, 1595. Abstract of Letters sent to Sir R. Bowes.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, April 5, 1595. Letters from Scotland to Bowes. Also ibid., Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, April 3, 1595. Also ibid., Mr John Colvile, April 1, 1595. Also ibid., April 2, 1595, "Deposition of Mr John Morton, Jesuit."

a temporary banishment was the only resource which remained. It was in vain that Father Gordon, Huntly's uncle, and a devoted Catholic, implored them to remain; in vain that on a solemn occasion, when Mass was said for the last time in the cathedral church at Elgin, this zealous priest, descending from the high altar and mounting the pulpit, exhorted them not to depart, but remain in their native country and hazard all for the faith. His discourse fell on deaf ears; and finding entreaty fruitless, he resolved to accompany them. On the 17th of March, Errol embarked at Peterhead: and on the 19th, two days after, Huntly, with his uncle and a suite of sixteen persons, took ship at Aberdeen for Denmark; intending, as he said, to pass through Poland into Italy.³

Scarcely had they departed, when intelligence of Bothwell reached court. To so miserable a state was he reduced, that he had been seen skulking near Perth with only two followers, meanly clad, and in utter destitution. He then disappeared, and none could tell his fate; but he re-emerged in Orkney, probably, like his infamous namesake, intending to turn pirate. He had one ship and a fly-boat; and his desperate fortunes were still followed, from attachment or adventure, by some of his old "*Camarados*," Colonel Boyd, Captain Foster, and a few other gentlemen. Apparently he was not successful; for we soon hear of him at Paris,⁴ in correspondence with his profligate associate, Archibald Douglas.

All apprehensions from Bothwell and the Catholic earls being at an end, and the king having most energetically fulfilled his promises to the Kirk, Protestantism being safe and the hopes of Spain destroyed, he had leisure to address himself to a more difficult task than his last—to restore something like order, justice, and tranquillity to the country. Here all

³ MS., State-paper Office, Extracts from Letters from Scotland, by Sir R. Bowes, April 5, 1595.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bothwell to Douglas, June 17, 1596.

was out of joint. The court was divided into factions. The queen, of whose religious orthodoxy great doubts began now to be entertained, hated Mar, who was still intrusted with the person and government of the young prince; a charge which, she insisted, belonged naturally to her.¹ The king supported Mar against his great rival the Chancellor Maitland, a man full of talent, of inordinate ambition, and, as we have already seen, unscrupulous, intriguing, and familiar with conspiracy and blood. Maitland strengthened himself against his enemies by courting the favour of the queen, who had at first treated all his advances with haughty suspicion; but latterly, dreading his strength, or conciliated by his proffered devotion, supported his faction, which included Buccleuch, Cessford, the Master of Glammis, and other powerful barons. The potent house of Hamilton affected neutrality; whilst the ministers of the Kirk also kept themselves aloof, and exerted their whole energies to procure the absolute ruin of Huntly and his exiled associates, by inducing the king to forfeit their estates in earnest, and reduce them to beggary. This James wisely refused. Enough, he thought, had already been done for the safety of the Protestant faith; and to cut up by the roots the ancient houses of Angus, Huntly, and Errol; to punish, by utter ruin and extermination, those who were already exiles for conscience' sake, would have been cruel and impolitic. To Bothwell, indeed, who had repeatedly conspired against his life, he shewed no mercy; and his great estates were divided between Hume, Cessford, and Buccleuch.² But the Countesses of Huntly and Errol were permitted to remain in Scotland, and matters so managed that their unfortunate lords should not be utterly destitute. The principle of James was to balance the different factions against each other, keeping all dependent on himself, and throw-

ing his weight occasionally into the one or the other scale, as he judged best. The probable restoration, therefore, of such great men as Huntly, was a useful threat to hold over the heads of their rivals. But with all his policy, the monarch found his position dangerous and difficult. The court and country were full of inflammable materials; and in such a state of things, events apparently trifling might produce a general convulsion. So at least thought Nicolson, the English resident at Edinburgh, on the occurrence of an event which, to feudal ears, sounded trifling enough. David Forrester, a retainer of Mar, and bailiff of Stirling, when riding from Edinburgh to that town, was, on some love-quarrel, waylaid and murdered by the Laird of Dunipace,³ assisted by the Bruces and the Livingstones, who belonged to the chancellor's faction. Mar instantly accepted this as a defiance; assembled a body of six hundred horse; vowed a deadly revenge; and interdicting the body from being buried, carried it along with him, displaying before it, on two spears, a ghastly picture of Forrester, all mangled and bleeding as he had died. In this way, the earl, in his steel jack, and his men armed to the teeth, carried his murdered vassal in a bravado through the lands of the Livingstones and Bruces, which lay near Linlithgow, on the road between Edinburgh and Stirling; dividing his little force into three wards, and expecting a ruffle with Buccleuch and Cessford, who were reported to be mustering their friends. But the peremptory remonstrances of the king prevented an immediate collision; and a "day of law," as it was then termed, was appointed for the trial of Forrester's slaughter.⁴

James's labour to preserve peace was, indeed, incessant; and but for his vigour and courage, the various factions would have torn the country in pieces. The chancellor had now

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, George Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, June 22, 1595.

² MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, p. 1184.

³ Dunipace is near Larbert, on the little river Carron.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, July 12, 1595. Also ibid., same to same, June 24, 1595.

gained to his side the powerful assistance of the house of Hamilton; so that his strength was almost irresistible. With his strength, however, increased the odium and unpopularity of his measures. It was now well known that he had been the chief assistant of Huntly in the murder of Moray: he was branded as a hypocrite, all smiles and professions upon the seat of justice, but deep, bloody, and unscrupulous when off it; expressing great love to the Kirk and the ministers, yet careless of practical religion; humble and devoted, as he said, to his sovereign, yet really so haughty, that he did not hesitate to measure his strength with the highest nobles in the land. It was this which provoked Mar, Argyle, and the rest of the ancient earls.

On one occasion James, observing Maitland's defiance, took him roundly to task; reminding him that he was but his creature, a man of yesterday, a cadet of a mean house compared with Mar, who had a dozen vassals for his one;¹ and that it ill became him to enter into proud speeches, or compare himself with the old nobles, and raise factions with Glammis and the queen against the master to whom he owed all. Pasquils, too, and biting epigrams, prognosticating some fatal end, were found pinned to his seat in the court.² But Maitland was naturally courageous, and believed himself powerful enough to keep head against the worst. Hamilton, Hume, Fleming, Livingstone, Buccleuch, Cessford, with the Master of Glammis, had now joined him against Mar; and the queen, finding herself thus supported, renewed her efforts to obtain possession of the young prince. The king was inexorable. He had been heard to swear that, were he on his death-bed and speechless, his last sign should be, that Mar should have the boy; and the queen, in despair, took to bed and pretended a mortal sickness. James shut his ears when the news

was brought him, and declared it all a trick. At last the lady, between anger and the agitation incident to her situation, for she was about to be confined, fell truly sick. The Mistress of Ochiltree, and a jury of matrons, sat upon her malady, and pronounced it no counterfeit; and James, in real alarm, hurried from Falkland. To his disgust and anger, it was told him that Buccleuch and Cessford, the two men whom he then most dreaded, were with her; but they did not dare abide his coming: and a reconciliation, half stormy, half affectionate, took place. She renewed her clamour for the keeping of the prince: he upbraided her for leaguing with such desperate men as Buccleuch and Cessford, who, in truth, at that moment, were plotting to restrain his person, seize the heir of the throne, and arraign his governor, one of the most faithful of his nobles, of high treason. To humour her would have been the extremity of weakness, and only playing his enemies' game, who, he said, should find that, though he loved her, he could keep his purpose and be master in his own kingdom.³ This resolute temper saved the monarch. The chancellor controlled Buccleuch, who alleged that they were throwing away their best opportunity: now they could seize the king; next day they themselves might be in fetters. All was ready: the king, the prince, the government, by one bold stroke might be their own. But Maitland's heart failed, or his loyalty revived. He forbade the enterprise. James rode back to Falkland; and when he next visited Edinburgh, his strength was such that he could defy his enemies.⁴ The ministers of the Kirk, scandalised by the divisions in the royal family, now remonstrated with the queen, awakened her to a higher sense of her conjugal duties, and convinced her, that to renounce all fac-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Colville to Sir R. Cecil, August 2, 1595.

² MS., State-paper Office, Advices from Edinburgh, March 20, 1594-5.

³ Ibid., May 27, 1595.

tions, and follow the commands of her royal husband, was her only safe and Christian course.¹ A letter, written at this time by Nicolson, the English envoy at the Scottish court, to Sir Robert Bowes, who, at his own earnest request, had been suffered to resign his place as resident ambassador, gives us an interesting account of this reconciliation and its effects :—

"The king and queen are lovingly together now at Falkland: the king to go to Stirling to-morrow, and so to his buck-hunting in Lennox and Clydesdale; and after to return to the queen to St Johnston's, there to receive the communion together. The queen first goeth to Sir R. Melvil's house, the Earl of Rothes', and other places, before she goes to St Johnston's. My Lord of Mar and she have spoken, by the king's means. At the first she was very sharp with Mar, but in the end gave him good countenance. Mr Patrick Galloway, in his sermon, was occasioned to teach of the duties of man and wife each to the other; and spoke so persuasively for the keeping their duties therein, as the queen thereon spake and conferred with him, and gave good ear to his advices, and promiseth to follow the same; and hath said that she will have him with her.

"The king caused Mr David Lindsay to travel with the queen, to see what he could try out of them; whereupon Mr David and the queen had long conference. And in the end, the queen said, 'Let the king be plain with the queen, and the queen should be plain with the king;' which Mr David showed to the king, causing him to receive the same even then out of the queen's own mouth; whereupon there was good and kind countenance and behaviour between them, both of them agreeing to satisfy each other; as Mr David looketh that, ere this, the king knoweth who hath persuaded the queen to these former courses; and the queen who hath moved the king to this strangeness with the queen; and that some will

be found to have dealt doubly and dangerously with them both. The king intendeth, by little and little, to draw the queen to where Mar is, and there to stay her from these parts, and the company of Buccleuch, Cessford, and the rest. Mr David holdeth the chancellor to be very honest between both parties, and to be for the king; but whatsoever he doeth, it is with consent and leave of the Master of Glammis, Buccleuch, and Cessford, who, if the chancellor should do otherwise, and they know of it, would be the chancellor's greatest enemies, and most dangerous. . . . The Lord Hume hath promised to follow the king, and is presently with him: so as it is held that the queen's faction is breaking. Always some think, that as the king intends by policy to win the queen, so the queen intends to win the king for the advantage of that side; and I pray God that this prove not too true, that in these fair flowers there prove not yet sharp pricks. As to the slaughter of David Forrester, my Lord of Mar, I think, shall give assurance, and keep on fair terms with such of the Livingstones and Bruces as were not executioners of David's murder; which executioners, for this cause, are to be banished the country by their own friends."²

While the court of Holyrood was occupied in gossiping upon such scenes of domestic intrigue and conjugal reconciliation, the Queen of England began bitterly to repent her neglect of Scotland, and to look with alarm to a storm which threatened her on the side of the Isles. She was now trembling for her empire in Ireland, where Tyrone had risen in formidable force, and, assisted with Roman gold and Spanish promises, threatened to wrest from her hands the fairest provinces of the kingdom. In these circumstances, both Elizabeth and the Irish prince looked for assistance and recruits to the Scottish Isles. These nurseries of brave soldiers and hardy seamen were now able to furnish a

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Colvile, August 18, 1595. Same, August 20.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, August 15, 1595.

formidable force: a circumstance not unknown to the English queen, as her indefatigable minister, Burghley, whose diplomatic feelers were as long as they were acute and sensitive, kept up a communication with the Isles. From a paper written in the end of the year 1593, by one of his northern correspondents,¹ it appears that the Isles could, on any emergency, fit out a force of six thousand hardy troops, inured to danger both by sea and land, and equipt for war on either element. Of these, two thousand wore defensive armour, actons, habergeons, and knapskulls;² the rest were bowmen or pikemen; but many, adds the island statist, had now become harquebusiers. This force, it is to be observed, was independent of those left at home to labour the ground; the whole of the Isles being different from the rest of feudal Scotland in one essential respect, "that they who occupied the ground were not charged to the wars."³ Of this western archipelago, the principal islands were Lewis and Skye, lying to the north, Islay and Mull to the south; and amongst the chief leaders, who assumed the state and independence of little princes, were the Earl of Argyle, Lauchlan Maclean of Duart, Angus Macdonald of Dunveg, Donald Gorm Macdonald of Sleat, and Roderick Macleod of Harris, known in traditional song as Ruari Mor.⁴ Of these chiefs, the Lord of Duart, commonly called Lauchlan Mor, was by far the most talented and conspicuous; and, as Elizabeth well knew, had the power of bridling or letting loose that formidable body of troops which Donald Gorm and Ruari Mor were now collecting to assist her enemies in Ireland. Lauchlan Mor was, in all respects, a remarkable person; by no means illiterate, for he had re-

¹ MS., State-paper Office, December 1593. Note of the West Isles of Scotland, for the Lord Treasurer.

² Acton, a quilted leathern jacket, worn under the armour; habergeon, a breast-plate of mail; knapskull, a steel cap or helmet.

³ MS., State-paper Office, December 1593. Note of the West Isles of Scotland, for the Lord Treasurer.

⁴ Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, p. 261.

ceived his nurture in the low country, and had married a daughter of the Earl of Glencairn. But in war and in personal prowess he had then no equal: an island Amadis of colossal strength and stature, and possessing, by the vigour of his natural talents, a commanding influence over the rude and fierce islesmen. It is curious to trace Elizabeth's connexion with this man. The Lord of Duart's confidential servant happened to be a certain shrewd Celt, named John Achinross; he, in turn, was connected by marriage with Master John Cunningham, a worthy citizen and merchant in Edinburgh. This honest bailie of the capital, forming the link between savage and civilized life, corresponded with Sir Robert Bowes; Bowes with Burghley or Sir Robert Cecil; and thus Elizabeth, sitting in her closet at Windsor or Greenwich, moved the strings which could assemble or disperse the chivalry of the Isles. This is no ideal picture, for the letters of the actors remain. As early as March 1594-5, Achinross informed Bowes that Maclean and Argyle were ready, not only to stay the clan Donnell, who, under Donald Gorm, were then mustering to assist Tyrone; but that Maclean himself would join the English army in Ireland, if Elizabeth would dispatch three or four ships to keep his galleys whilst they attacked the enemy.⁵ As the summer came on, and the fleet of Donald and his associates waited only for a fair wind, Cunningham hurried to the Isles, had a conference with Maclean, and thence rode post to London, where, in an interview with Sir Robert Cecil, he urged the necessity of instant action and assistance.⁶ The bridle which the Laird of Duart held over the Islesmen was simple enough; being a garrison of six hundred mercenaries, well armed, and ready to be

⁵ MS., State-paper Office, March 25, 1595, contents of John Achinross's letter to Robert Bowes.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, John Cunningham to Sir R. Bowes, June 25, 1595. Also, Maclean of Duart to Sir Robert Cecil, July 4, 1595. Also, same to Sir R. Bowes, July 4, 1595. Also, ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, July 5, 1595

led by him, on a moment's warning, against any island chief who embarked in foreign service, and left his lands undefended at home.¹ The support of this force, however, required funds: Elizabeth demurred; Maclean was obliged to disband his men; and the most part of the fleet weighed anchor, and bore away for Ireland.² It consisted of a hundred sail, of which fifty were galleys, the rest smaller craft; and the number of soldiers and mariners was estimated at about five thousand.³ Nine hundred men, however, under the Captain of the clan Ranald,⁴ still remained; and as they passed Mull had the temerity to land for the night; running their "galleys, boats, and birlings," into a little harbour, where they imagined themselves secure. But Maclean, by what Achinross termed a "bauld onset and prattie feit of weir," took the whole company prisoners, threw the chiefs into irons, sent them to his dungeons in his different castles, appropriated their galleys, and transported the common men to the mainland.⁵ Amongst the chief prisoners then taken, were the Captain of clan Ranald and three of his uncles, the Laird of Knoydart, M'Ian of Ardnamurchan, Donald Gorm's brother, and others; and an account of the surprise was immediately transmitted by John Achinross to Nicolson, the English envoy at the court of James. We can pardon the enthusiasm and abominable orthoepy of this devoted Highland servant when he exclaims: "My maister is acquentit with thir prattie onsettis, without respect to number findand vantage: for divers tymis he plaid this dance heir aganis his enemies. I assuir you, thir men that are tane and in captivity, ar the maist douttif and abil men in the Ilis. Lat your guid maister and Sir Robert comfort thame

with this gude luke, done be ane valyeant man of weir, and ane man of honor, in beginning of her majestie's service."⁶

Elizabeth was delighted with this exploit of Lauchlan Mor, assured him of her gratitude and friendship, and sent a more substantial proof than words, in a present of a thousand crowns: an "honourable token of her favour," as he called it in a letter to Cecil, in which he promised all duty and service to the queen. She wrote, at the same time, to the Earl of Argyle;⁷ flattered him by some rich token of her regard; and ordered Nicolson, her resident at the Scottish court, to deliver it and her letter to him in person, at Dunoon in Argyle. All this was successfully accomplished; and so cordially did Maclean and Argyle co-operate, sowing distrust and division amongst the chiefs and leaders who had followed the banner of Donald Gorm and Macleod, that their formidable force only made the coast of Ireland to meet the English ships, which were on the watch for them, enter into a friendly treaty, and disperse to their different ocean nests, before a single effort of any moment had been made. This sudden arrival, and as sudden disappearance of the fleet of the Islesmen, appears to have puzzled the chroniclers of the times, and even their more acute modern successor. A black cloud had been seen to gather over Ireland; and men waited in stillness for the growl of the thunder and the sweep of the tempest, when it melted into air, and all was once more tranquillity. This seemed unaccountable, almost miraculous; but the letters of honest John Cunningham, and his Celtic relative Achinross, whose epistles smack so strongly of his Gaelic original, introduce us behind the scenes, and discover Lauchlan Mor as the secret agent, the Celtic Prospero, whose wand dispersed the galleys, and restored serenity to the ocean. The reader may be pleased with an extract from a letter of this

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, John Achinross to George Nicolson, July 22, 1595.
² Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, July 26, 1595.

³ Ibid., Mr George Areskine to Nicolson, Denoon, July 31, 1595.

⁴ Ibid., same to same.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Achinross to Nicolson, July 31, 1595.

⁶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Achinross to Nicolson.

⁷ Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, August 1, 1595.

brave Lord of Duart to Sir R. Bowes, although his style is a little ponderous, and by no means so polished as the Danish steel axe with which it was his delight to hew down his enemies : he is alluding to the future plan of the campaign intended by Tyrone and O'Donnell against Elizabeth, and the best way to defeat it :—

" The earl is to pursue you on one side, and O'Donnell is to pursue your lands presently on the other side. They think to harm you meikle by this way. If my opinion were followed out, the earl and O'Donnell shall be pursued on both the sides : to wit, by your force of Ireland on the one side, and by the Earl of Argyle's force and mine, with my own presence, on this side. To the which, I would that you moved the Earl of Argyle to furnish two thousand men : myself shall furnish other two thousand ; and I would have six or eight hundred of your spearmen, with their *butties*, [sic] and four hundred pikemen. If I were once landed in Ireland with this company, having three or four ships to keep our galleys, I hope in God the earl should lose that name ere our return. . . . In my name your lordship shall have my duty of humble service remembered to her majesty, and commendations to good Sir Robert Cecil, with whom I think to be acquainted. Your lordship will do me a great pleasure if you will let me know of anything in Scotland that may pleasure Sir Robert. I am so *hamely*¹ with your lordship, that without you let me know hereof, I will think that your lordship does dissmill with me. I am here, in Argyle, at pastime and hunting with the earl my cousin. I have respect to other kind of hunting nor this hunting of deer. I am hamely with your lordship, as ye may perceive. At meeting, (for the which I think long,) God willing, we shall renew our acquaintance."²

From this island episode we must

¹ Hamely, familiar.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Lauchlan Maclean of Duart, to Sir R. Bowes, Garvie in Argyle, August 22, 1595.

turn to a different scene, the death-bed of a great minister. The Chancellor Maitland lord Thirlstane, had now, for some years, ruled the court and the country with a firm, unchallenged, and, as many thought, a haughty superiority. He had given mortal offence to the queen; had provoked the hostility of the highest nobles of the land; and, it was whispered, was more feared than loved by his royal master. But he had kept his ground; partly by superiority in practical business talents to all his competitors; partly by that deep political sagacity and foresight which made Burghley pronounce him the " wisest man in Scotland;" and not least of all, by that high personal courage and somewhat unscrupulous familiarity with conspiracy, and even with blood, which blotted most men of this semi-barbarous age. He had, besides, been a pretty consistent Protestant; and although in earlier years he had attacked some of Knox's political tenets, yet recently, the strong and decided part he had adopted against Huntly and the Catholic earls made him a favourite with the ministers of the Kirk. So resistless had he now become, that the queen and her friends had renounced all opposition, and joined his faction against Mar, the governor of the prince, the favourite of his royal master, and one of the oldest and most powerful of the higher nobles.³ In this his palmy state, when plotting new schemes of ambition, and inflaming the king against the queen; meeting Cessford and Buccleuch, and his other associates, in night " Trysts;"⁴ marshalling secretly his whole strength, and laying a " platt," as it was then called, or conspiracy against Mar, by which he hoped to hurl him from his height of power, and rule unchecked over his sovereign; he was suddenly seized with a mortal distemper.⁵ At first he struggled fiercely against it,

³ MS., State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, September 1, 1595.

⁴ Tryst, an appointed place of rendezvous.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colville to Cecil, September 10, 1595. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, September 19, 1595. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, September 22, 1595.

tried to throw it off, rode restlessly from place to place, and appeared so active that it was currently said the sickness was only one of his old pretences; but at last the malady mastered him, threw him on his couch, and compelled him, in fear and remorse, to send for the ministers of the Kirk, and implore a visit from the king. James resisted repeated messages; it was even said he had whispered in a courtier's ear, that it would be a small matter if the chancellor were hanged; and when Robert Bruce, one of the leading ministers, rode at four in the morning to Thirlstane, he found the dying statesman full of penitence for neglected opportunities, imploring the prayers of the Kirk, and promising to make many discoveries of strange matters if God granted him time for amendment and reformation.¹ What appeared to weigh heaviest on his conscience, was the part he had acted in sowing dissension between the king and queen; and he seemed much shaken by fears that many dark dealings would come out on this subject. He expressed sorrow, also, for his "partial information against John Knox, and other good men;" and when asked what advice he would leave to the king for the management of his estate, shook his head, observing, "it was too late speer'd,"² as his thoughts were on another world. Even his enemies, who had quoted against him the Italian adage, "*Il periculō passato, il santo gabato,*" rejoiced at last to find that the sickness was no counterfeit; and were little able to restrain their satisfaction when news arrived at court that the chancellor was no more. He died at Thirlstane on the night of the 3d October; and John Colvile, his bitter enemy, exultingly wrote to England that his faction or party were

¹ MS., State-paper Office, September 10, 1595, Advertisements from Scotland. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, September 22, 1595. Ibid., same to same, September 24. Ibid., same to same, October 3, 1595. "He [the chancellor] is sore troubled in conscience, and with fear that his dealings between the king and queen should come out."

² Speer'd; asked. The question was asked too late.

headless, and must fall to pieces: whilst his royal master publicly lamented and secretly rejoiced; inditing to his memory a high poetical panegyric in the shape of an epitaph, and observing, that he would *weel ken* who next should have the Seals, and was resolved no more to use great men or chancellors in his affairs, but such as he could. correct and were "hangable."³

All things, however, were thrown loose and into confusion by his death. The Borders, which had been for some time in disorder, became the daily scenes of havoc, theft and murder; torn with feuds between the Maxwells and the Douglasses; ravaged by invasions of the English;⁴ and so reckless of all restraint, that the personal presence of the king was loudly called for. At court the competitors for the chancellor's place were busy, bitter, and clamorous; in the Kirk the ministers gave warning that the Catholic earls, now in banishment, had been plotting their return, and that the Spaniards were on the eve of invading England and Scotland with a mighty force.⁵ It was absolutely necessary, they said, that the Kirk should have authority to convene the people in arms, to resist the threatened danger; and that an ambassador should be sent to England to arrange some plan of common defence.⁶ James at once consented to the first proposal, and gave immediate directions for the defence of the country; but he refused to send an ambassador to Elizabeth, who had rejected his suits and broken her promises, although he had preferred her friendship and alliance to that of any other prince in Europe. He was, at this moment, he said, ready to act as her lieutenant against the Spaniards, and perish with England in defence of the true religion.⁷

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, October 8, 1595, Nicolson to Bowes. Ibid., same to same, January 11, 1595.

⁴ Ibid., October 20, 1595.

⁵ Ibid., November 27, 1595.

⁶ MS., State-paper Office, Advertisements from Edinburgh, December 6, 1595.

⁷ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, November 27, 1595.

Yet still she withheld her supplies, and treated him with suspicion, notwithstanding the proofs he was daily giving of his sincerity in religion, and although she knew him to be drowned in debt. For this last assertion—the dreadful embarrassment of his finances, there was too good ground; and it had been long apparent that, unless some thorough reform took place, matters must come to an extremity. The office of treasurer was held by the Master of Glammis, a man of great power, and one of the chief friends of the late chancellor. Sir Robert Melville was his deputy; Seton, laird of Parbreath, filled the office of comptroller; and Douglas, the provost of Glenclooden, that of collector. All of them had been protected by Thirlstane during his supremacy in the council; and, it was suspected by the king, had fattened at the royal expense. This idea was encouraged by the queen, who now lived on the most loving terms with her lord, and omitted no opportunity to point out the rapid diminution of the crown revenues, and the contrast between her own command of money, out of so small a dowry as she enjoyed, and the reduced and beggarly condition of the household and palaces of her royal consort. On New-Year's Day, coming playfully to the king, she shook a purse full of gold in his face, and bade him accept it as her gift. He asked where she got it. "From my councillors," she replied, "who have but now given me a thousand pieces in a purse: when will yours do the like?" "Never," said the king; and calling instantly for his collector and comptroller, he dismissed them on the spot, and chose the queen's councillors as his financial advisers. These were Seton lord Urquhart, president of the Session; Mr John Lindsay, Mr John Elphinstone, and Mr Thomas Hamilton; to whom James committed the entire management of his revenues and household. It was soon found that the charge would be too laborious for so small a number, and four others were added: the Prior of Blantyre, Skene the clerk-

register, Sir David Carnegie, and Mr Peter Young, master-almoner. These new officers sat daily in the Upper Tolbooth, and from their number were called *Octavians*. They acted without salary; held their commissions under the king's hand alone; and by the vigour, good sense, and orderly arrangements which they adopted, promised a speedy and thorough reformation of all financial abuses.¹

Elizabeth now deemed it necessary to send Sir Robert Bowes once more as her ambassador to Scotland. He had been recalled from that court, or rather suffered, at his own earnest entreaty, to return to England, as far back as October 1594;² and since that time to the present, (January 1595-6,) the correspondence with England, and the political interests of that kingdom, had been entrusted to Mr George Nicolson, who had long acted as Bowes's secretary; and who, from the time that this minister left Edinburgh till his return to the Scottish court, kept up an almost daily correspondence with him. Elizabeth instructed Bowes to assure James of her unalterable friendship, but of the impossibility of advancing a single shilling, drained as she was by her assistance to France, without which Henry must have lost his throne; her war in Ireland; and her preparations against Spain, which, at that instant, had fitted out a more mighty armament against her than the armada of 1588. The ambassador was entrusted not only with a letter from the English queen to James, but with a letter and message to Queen Anne, whom he was to greet with every expression of friendship, and to reproach mildly for her reserve in not communicating to Elizabeth the secret history of the late quarrels between her and her royal husband, regarding the government and keeping of the young prince. He was also to touch on a still more delicate subject—the

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Bowes, January 7, 1595-6. John Colvile, Advertisements from Scotland; from December 7 to January 1, 1595-6.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, October 19, 1594.

reports which had reached the court of England of her change of religion; and to warn her that, although his mistress utterly disbelieved such a slander, she could not be too much on her guard against the crafty men who were in communication with the Pope, and eager to seduce her to their errors.¹ Bowes's reception by James was gracious and cordial. The king declared his satisfaction in hearing that his good sister was so well prepared against the meditated invasion of the Spaniard, and his own readiness to hazard all—life, crown, and kingdom, in her defence and his own; but he reminded Bowes of Lord Zouch's arguments and unfulfilled promises; and whilst he spoke feelingly of his pecuniary embarrassments, and the impossibility of raising soldiers without funds, he hinted significantly, that the Pope and the Catholic earls threw about their gold pieces with an open hand; and did not conceal that large offers had been made to draw him to the side of Spain, although he had no mind to be so "limed." He then mentioned his intention of sending his servant, Mr David Foulis, to communicate to Elizabeth the confessions of certain priests whom he had lately seized, and other discoveries with which she ought to be acquainted; and alluding to Doleman's book on the Succession to the English Crown, which had been recently published, observed, that he took it to be the work of some crafty politician in England, drawn up with affected modesty and impartiality, but real malice against every title except that of the King of Spain and his daughter. Bowes assured the king that this famous work, which made so much noise at the time, was written not in England but in Spain, by Persons, an English Jesuit and traitor; but James retained his scepticism.²

The ambassador next sought the queen, and was soon on very intimate

and confidential terms with this princess, who expressed herself highly gratified by Elizabeth's letter. Nothing, she said, could give her greater delight than to receive such assurances of kindness and affection; and she would readily follow her advice, as of one whom she most honoured, loved, and trusted; but as to the delicate subject of the late differences between her and the king, and her wish to get the prince into her hands, the matter had been so sudden, and full of peril, that she dared not send either letter or message to the Queen of England. She then threw the blame of the whole on the late chancellor; who had acted, she said, with great baseness, both towards herself and the king. It was he who had first moved her to get the prince out of Mar's hands; it was he who animated the king against her, persuading him that such removal would endanger his crown and person: "and yet," said she, addressing Bowes with great animation and some bitterness, "it was this same man who dealt so betwixt the king and myself, and with the persons interested therein, that the surprise of the body of the king was plotted, and would have taken place at his coming to Edinburgh; but I discovered the conspiracy, and warned and stayed him. Had he come, he must have been made captive, and would have remained in captivity." "These secrets," said Bowes, in his letter to Elizabeth, "she desired to be commended by my letters to your majesty's only hands, view, and secrecy; and that none other should know the same." As to her reported change of religion, the queen frankly admitted that attempts had been made for her conversion to Rome; but all had now passed and failed: she remained a Protestant: and would rather not reveal the names of the practisers. If they again assaulted her religion, Elizabeth should know who they were, and how she had answered them.³

The continuance of the rebellion in Ireland, and the intrigues of Tyrone

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Answers to Mr Bowes's articles, January 14, 1595-6. Wholly in Lord Burghley's hand.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Lord Burghley, February 24, 1595-6.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to the Queen, February 24, 1595-6.

with the Western Isles, had greatly annoyed Elizabeth : and Bowes was ordered to communicate with the king, and with Maclean of Duart, on the subject. He found that James had resolved to adopt speedily some decided measures to bring the Isles into order ; and hoped to succeed by employing in this service the Earl of Argyle, Maclean, and Mackenzie, to whose sister Maclean had lately married his eldest son. The ambassador had been, as usual, tutored to spare his mistress's purse, whilst he sounded Maclean's "mind, power, and resolution;"¹ and exerted himself to the utmost to drive a hard bargain. He was alarmed, too, with the din of warlike preparations then sounding through the western archipelago : Donald Gorm was mustering his men, and repairing his galleys; Macleod of Harris had lately landed from Ireland, and was ready to return with fresh power ; and Angus Macconel, another potent chief, was assembling his galleys and soldiers.² Maclean himself was in Tiree, then reckoned ten days' journey from Edinburgh ; and Argyle, so intent in investigating the murder of Campbell of Calder, now traced to Campbell of Ardkinglass, that Bowes could have no immediate transactions with either. He set, however, Cunningham and Achinross, his former agents, to work ; and when these active emissaries got amongst the Highlanders, the storm of letters, memorials, contracts, queries, answers, and estimates, soon poured down on the unhappy head of Bowes, who implored Cecil, but with small success, to send him instructions, and some portion of treasure, to satisfy Elizabeth's Celtic auxiliaries, who clamoured for gold. Maclean was perfectly ready, as before, to attack Tyrone ; and confident that the plan of the campaign, which he had already communicated, if carried into vigorous effect, would reduce the great rebel. But he made

it imperative on the queen to furnish two thousand soldiers, and advance a month's pay to his men. He himself, he said, had neither spared "gear nor pains in the service ; and yet her majesty's long promised present of a thousand crowns had not yet arrived."³ These remonstrances produced the effect desired. Elizabeth was shamed into some settlement of her promises ; and Maclean, with his island chivalry, declared himself ready to obey her majesty's orders with all promptitude and fidelity.⁴

The ambassador speedily discovered that the eighteen months during which he had been absent, had added both energy and wisdom to James's character. It was evident there was more than empty compliment in Nicolson's observation—that in severity he began to rule like a king. There was still, indeed, about him much that was frivolous, undignified, and capricious ; much favouritism, much extravagance, an extraordinary love of his pleasures, and a passion for display in oratory, poetry, theology, and scholastic disputation, which was frequently ridiculous ; but with all this, he was dreaded by his nobles, and compelled respect and obedience. As Elizabeth advanced to old age, his eye became steadily fixed on the English crown, which he considered his undoubted right ; and the one great engrossing object of his policy was to secure it. His fairest chance, he thought, to gain the respect and good wishes of the English people, when death took from them their own great princess, was to shew that he knew how to rule over his own unruly subjects. Hence his vigorous determination to restrain, by every possible means, the power of the greater nobility ; to recruit his exhausted finances ; to reduce the Isles, and consolidate his kingdom ; and to bridle the claims of the Kirk, in all

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, February 24, 1595-6. Ibid., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, March 6, 1595-6. Ibid., Bowes to Cecil, March 16, 1595-6. Ibid., Maclean to Bowes, Coll., March 18, 1595-6. Ibid., Maclean's Answers to Bowes, March 30, 1596.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, April 7, 1596.

matters of civil government, or interference with the royal prerogative : whilst he warmly seconded their efforts for the preservation of the reformed religion, and resistance to the efforts of its enemies.

Not long after Bowes's arrival, the convention of the General Assembly met in Edinburgh ; and the king, then absent on a hunting expedition, broke off his sport, and returned to Holyrood, that he might "honour the Kirk (as Bowes observed) with his presence and his oration." The moderator, Mr Robert Pont, warmly welcomed the royal party ; which embraced the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, the Earls of Argyle, Mar, and Orkney : and addressing the king, thanked him in name of the Assembly for his presence ; reminding him of the honour obtained by Constantine in favouring the ancient fathers of the Church, and by David in dancing before the ark. In reply, James professed his zeal for religion since his youth up. He had ever esteemed it, as he declared, more glory to be a Christian than a king, whatever slanders to the contrary were spoken against him. It was this zeal which moved him to convene the present Assembly : for being aware of the designs of Spain, their great enemy, against religion and this isle, he was anxious to meet, not only the ministry, but the barons and gentlemen, to receive their advice, and resolve on measures to resist the common enemy. Two points he would press on them—reformation and preparation : the reformation of themselves, clergy, people, and king. For his own part, he never refused admonition : he was ever anxious to be told his faults ; and his chamber door should never be closed to any minister who reproved him. All he begged was, that they would first speak privately before they arraigned him in open pulpit. He hated the common vice of ambition ; but of one thing he was really ambitious—to have the name of James the Sixth honoured as the establisher of religion, and the provider of livings for the ministry throughout his whole dominions. And

now, as to his second point, preparation against the common enemy, one thing was clear—they must have paid troops ; the country must be put to charges : the times were changed since their forefathers followed each his lord or his laird to Pinkie field ; a confused multitude, incapable of discipline, and an easy prey to regular soldiers, as the event of that miserable day could testify. Of how many great names had it been the wreck and ruin ! Since then the fashion and art of war had entirely altered ; and he protested it was a shame that Scotland should be lying in careless security, whilst all other countries were up and in arms.¹

This speech gave great satisfaction to the ministers ; and their joy was increased by a message brought to them soon after by Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce, intimating the king's resolution to have the whole kirks in Scotland supplied with ministers, and endowed with sufficient stipends. He requested the Kirk to cause their commissioners to meet with those councillors and officers whom he had appointed for this purpose, and to fix upon some plan for carrying his resolution into effect. But he commanded his commissioners to represent to the ministers of the Kirk how much this good work was hindered by themselves. Why did they teach the people that the king and his councillors resisted the planting of kirks, and swallowed up the livings of the clergy, when they were truly most willing that the whole kirks should be planted, and the rents of the ministers augmented, as far as could be obtained with consent of the nobility and the tacksmen of the teinds,² whose rights, without order of law, could not be impaired ?³

¹ MS., State-paper Office, March 25, 1596, the King of Scots' Speech at the Assembly of the Ministry. Ibid., Bowes to Lord Burghley, March 26, 1596.

² Tacksmen of the teinds, that is the farmers of the tithes.

³ MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce. Answers of the General Assembly to the same, March 30, 1596.

The Assembly received such propositions with the utmost satisfaction ; and whilst they protested their ignorance that any of their number had given, in their discourses, any just cause of offence, it would be their care, (they said,) in future, so wisely to handle their doctrine, that neither king nor council should be discouraged in the furtherance of their good work. Meantime, before they separated, they would humbly beseech his majesty to examine and remove "certain griefs which still eat like a canker into the body of the Kirk." Divers Jesuits and excommunicated Papists were entertained within the country, confirming in error those already perverted ; endangering the unstable, and holding out hopes of the return of the Papist earls, with the assistance of strangers. The lands of these forfeited traitors were, to the grief of all good men, still peaceably enjoyed by them ; their confederates and friends suffered to go at large ; whilst the laws, not only against such treasons, but on all other points, were so partially administered, that a flood of crime, murders, oppressions, incests, adulteries, and every species of wrong, inundated the land, and threatened to tear society in pieces.¹

To this remonstrance a favourable answer was returned ; and nothing but fair weather appeared between the sovereign and the Kirk. Yet it was whispered that, beneath this serenity, James had some perilous projects in his head, and meditated a restoration of the Catholic earls.² All, however, was quiet for the moment ; and the king was looking anxiously for the return of his envoy Foulis, who had

been sent to Elizabeth, when an event occurred on the borders which threatened to throw everything into confusion. Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, a baron of proud temper, undaunted courage, and considered one of the ablest military leaders in Scotland, was at this time warden of the west marches ; having for his brother-warden of England, Lord Scrope, also a brave and experienced officer. Scrope's deputy was a gentleman of the name of Salkeld ; Buccleuch's, a baron of his own clan, Robert Scott of Haining : and in the absence of the principals, it was the duty of these subordinate officers to hold the warden courts for the punishment of outlaws and offenders. Such courts presented a curious spectacle : for men met in perfect peace and security, protected by the law of the Borders, which made it death for any Englishman or Scotsman to draw weapon upon his greatest foe, from the time of holding the court till next morning at sunrise. It was judged that, in this interval, all might return home ; and it is easy to see that, with such a population as that of the Borders, nothing but the most rigid enforcement of this law could save the country from perpetual rapine and murder. William Armstrong of Kinmont, or in the more graphic and endearing phraseology of the borders, *Kinmont Willie*, was at this time one of the most notorious and gallant thieves or freebooters in Liddesdale. He was himself a man of great personal strength and stature ; and had four sons, Jock, Francie, Geordie, and Sandie Armstrong, each of them a brave and more successful moss-trooper than the other. Their exploits had made them known and dreaded over the whole district ; and their father and they had more "bills filed" against them at the warden courts, more personal quarrels and family feuds to keep their blood hot and their hands on their weapons, than any twenty men in Liddesdale. This Willie of Kinmont, who was a retainer of Buccleuch and a special favourite of his chief, had been attending a warden court, held by the English and Scottish de-

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Instructions to Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce. Answers of the General Assembly to the same, March 30, 1596.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, May 18, 1596. It was about this time, June 7, 1596, that the great Napier presented to the king his paper entitled "Secret Inventions profitable and necessary in these days for defence of the island, and notwithstanding of Strangers, Enemies of God's Truth and Religion." It will be found in Napier's Life of John Napier of Merchiston, p. 247.

puty wardens, at a place named the Dayholm of Kershope, where a small burn or rivulet divides the two countries, and was quietly returning home through Liddesdale, with three or four in company, when he was suddenly attacked by a body of two hundred English Borderers, chased for some miles, captured, tied to a horse, and carried in triumph to Carlisle castle; where Lord Scrope the governor and warden cast him, heavily ironed, into the common prison. Such an outrageous violation of Border law was instantly complained of by Buccleuch, who wrote repeatedly to Lord Scrope, demanding the release of his follower; and receiving no satisfactory reply, swore that he would bring Kinmont Willie out of Carlisle castle, quick or dead, with his own hand.¹ The threat was esteemed a mere bravado; for the castle was strongly garrisoned and well fortified, in the middle of a populous and hostile city, and under the command of Lord Scrope, as brave a soldier as in all England. Yet Buccleuch was not intimidated. Choosing a dark tempestuous night, (the 13th of April,) he assembled two hundred of his bravest men at the tower of Morton, a fortalice on the "debateable land," on the water of Sark, about ten miles from Carlisle. Amongst these, the leader whom he most relied on was Watt Scott of Harden; but along with him were Watt Scott of Branxholm, Watt Scott of Goldielands, Jock Elliot of the Copshaw, Sandie Armstrong, son to Hobbie the Laird of Mangerton, Kinmont's four sons—Jock, Francie, Sandie, and Geordie Armstrong, Rob of the Langholm, and Willie Bell the Redcloak; all noted and daring men. They were well mounted, armed at all points, and carried with them scaling-ladders, besides iron crowbars, sledge-hammers, hand-picks, and axes. Thus furnished, and favoured by the extreme darkness of the night, they passed the river Esk; rode briskly through the Grahames' coun-

try; forded the Eden, then swollen over its banks; and came to the brook Caday, close by Carlisle, where Buccleuch made his men dismount, and silently led eighty of them, with the ladders and iron tools, to the foot of the wall of the base or outer court of the castle. Everything favoured them: the heavens were as black as pitch, the rain descended in torrents; and as they raised their ladders to fix them on the cope-stone, they could hear the English sentinels challenge as they walked their rounds. To their rage and disappointment, the ladders proved too short; but finding a postern in the wall, they undermined it, and soon made a breach enough for a soldier to squeeze through. In this way a dozen stout fellows passed into the outer court, (Buccleuch himself being the fifth man who entered,) disarmed and bound the watch, wrenched open the postern from the inside, and thus admitting their companions, were masters of the place. Twenty-four troopers now rushed to the castle jail, Buccleuch meantime keeping the postern, forced the door of the chamber where Kinmont was confined, carried him off in his irons, and sounding their trumpet, the signal agreed on, were answered by loud shouts and the trumpet of Buccleuch, whose troopers filled the base court. All was now terror and confusion, both in town and castle. The alarm-bell rang, and was answered by his brazen brethren of the cathedral and the town-house; the beacon blazed up on the top of the great tower; and its red, uncertain glare on the black sky and the shadowy forms and glancing armour of the borderers, rather increased the horror and their numbers. None could see their enemy or tell his real strength. Lord Scrope, believing, as he afterwards wrote to Burghley, that five hundred Scots were in possession of the castle, kept himself close within his chamber. Kinmont Will himself, as he was carried on his friends' shoulders beneath the warden's window, roared

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C. The names of such as enforced the Castle for Kinmont; dated, in Burghley's hand, April 13

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C. The names of such as enforced the Castle for Kinmont.

out a lusty "Good night" to his lordship; and in a wonderfully brief space Buccleuch had effected his purpose, joined his men on the Caday, remounted his troopers, forded once more the Esk and the Eden, and bearing his rescued favourite in the middle of his little band, regained the Scottish Border before sunrise. This brilliant exploit, the last and assuredly one of the bravest feats of Border warfare, was long talked of; embalmed in an inimitable ballad; and fondly dwelt on by tradition, which has preserved some graphic touches. Kinmont, in swimming his horse through the Eden, which was then flooded, was much cumbered by the irons round his ankles; and is said to have dryly observed, that often as he had breasted it, he never had such heavy spurs. His master, Buccleuch, eager to rid him of these shackles, halted at the first smith's house they came to within the Scottish Border; but the door was locked, the family in bed, and the knight of the hammer so sound a sleeper, that he was only wakened by the lord warden thrusting his long spear through the window, and nearly spitting both vulcan and his lady.¹

Jocular, however, as were these circumstances to the victors, the business was no laughing matter to Lord Scrope, who came forth from his bed-chamber to find that his castle had been stormed, his garrison bearded, and his prisoner carried off by only eighty men. He instantly wrote to the privy-council and Lord Burghley, complaining of so audacious an attack upon one of the queen's castles in time of peace; and advising his royal mistress to insist with James on the delivery of Buccleuch, that he might receive the punishment which so audacious an outrage, as he termed it, deserved. But Buccleuch had much to offer in his defence; he pleaded that Kinmont's seizure and imprisonment had been a gross violation of the

law; that it was not until every possible representation had failed, and till his own sovereign's remonstrance, addressed to Elizabeth, had been treated with contempt, that he took the matter into his own hands; and that his borderers had committed no outrage, either on life or property, although they might have made Scrope and his garrison prisoners, and sacked the city. All this was true; and the king for a while resisted compliance with Elizabeth's demand, in which he was supported by the whole body of his council and barons, and even by the ministers of the Kirk; whilst the people were clamorous in their applause, and declared that no more gallant action had been done even in Wallace's days.² But at last James's spirit quailed under the impetuous remonstrance of the queen; and the Border chief was first committed to ward in the castle of St Andrews,³ and afterwards sent on parole to England, where he remained till the outrages of the English borderers rendered his services as warden absolutely necessary to preserve the country from havock.⁴ He was then delivered. It is said that, during his stay in England as a prisoner at large, he was sent for by Elizabeth, who loved bold actions even in her enemies. She demanded of him, with one of those lion-like glances which used to throw her proudest nobles on their knees, how he had dared to storm her castle: to which the border baron, nothing daunted, replied — "What, madam, is there that a brave man may not dare?" The rejoinder pleased her; and turning to her courtiers, she exclaimed — "Give me a thousand such leaders, and I'll shake any throne in Europe!"⁵

This obsequiousness of the Scottish king to the wishes of the Queen of England was not without a purpose;

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, July 3, 1596. Spottiswood, p. 416.

³ Ibid., August 19, 1596. Ibid., October 12, 1596.

⁴ Ibid., Bowes to the queen, November 10, 1596.

⁵ Notes on the ballad of Kinmont Willie. Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, vol. ii., pp. 49, 50. Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi., p. 318.

¹ Contemporary Account in the Warrender MSS.; and MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Lord Scrope to Burghley. Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, vol. ii., p. 60.

for James had now resolved on the restoration of the Catholic earls, and anticipated the utmost opposition, not only from the powerful party of the Kirk, but from Burghley and his royal mistress. The aged lord treasurer, who had long managed the whole affairs of Scotland, had recently written to his son, Sir Robert Cecil, now secretary of state, that he suspected the "Octavians," the eight councillors who now ruled the state, to be little else than "hollow Papists." It was evident, he added, that the king was much governed by them, and that his affection to the "crew" would increase: he advised, therefore, that Bowes, the English ambassador, should have secret conference with the ministers of the Kirk, who would discover the truth, and devise a remedy.¹ This was written in July; and there were good reasons for Burghley's suspicions. As early as May, Bowes had detected the incipient movement in favour of the banished earls, and their resolution to petition the king for their return.² They were to make submission to the king and the Church, and to have their cause espoused by the Duke of Lennox. Not long after, the Earl of Huntly landed from the Continent at Eyemouth; and passing in disguise into Scotland, encountered on his road the Lord St Colm, whose brother he had slain. Fortunately for the returned exile, his mean dress concealed him from the vengeance of his enemy, and he arrived safely amongst his friends; who, aware of the court intrigues in his favour, exerted their utmost efforts to procure his restoration. But these were met by cries of horror and warning from the Kirk, which increased to their loudest note when it was reported that Errol had been seen with Huntly at his castle, the Bog of Gicht, and that Angus had dared to come secretly into Perth, from which he was only driven by a peremptory charge of the magistrates.³

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Burghley to Sir Robert Cecil, July 10, 1596, addressed, "To my loyving son."

² Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, May 18, 1596.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Oct. 20, 1596.

Meanwhile the Countess of Huntly, who had much influence at court, presented some overtures upon the part of her husband. He had never, he said, held any traffic with any individuals whatever, against the reformed religion, since his leaving Scotland, and was ready to abide his trial, if any one dared to accuse him. He was ready, also, to banish from his company all seminary priests and known Papists; and would willingly hold conference on the subject of religion with any ministers of the Kirk, by whose arguments he might possibly be induced to embrace their religion. He would receive, he added, any Presbyterian pastor into his house for his better instruction; would support him at his own expense; would assist the Kirk with his utmost power in the maintenance of their discipline, and only required, in return, that a reasonable time should be given him to be satisfied in his conscience; and that, meanwhile, he should be absolved from the heavy sentence of excommunication which had been pronounced against him.⁴

Nothing could be more moderate than such requests; but the Kirk fired at the very idea that an excommunicated traitor, as they termed the earl, who had been guilty of idolatry, a crime punishable by death, and who, in the face of his sentence of banishment, had dared, without license, to return, should have the hardihood to propose any terms whatever. It was whispered that the Spanish faction was daily gaining strength; that the earls would not show themselves so openly unless they knew their return to be acceptable to the king; that the party against the truth and liberty of the Word was bold and confident of success, both in England and at home; and that, if some great and resolute resistance were not instantly made, the Kirk, with all its boasted purity and privileges, would become the prey of Antichrist. To remedy or avert these evils, a day of humiliation was ap-

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Offer of the Countess of Huntly, October 19, 1596. Also, Rymer's *Fœdera*, vcl. xvi., p. 305.

pointed to be observed with more than ordinary rigour; in which the people and the ministry were called upon to weep between the porch and the altar, for a land polluted by the enemies of God, and threatened with the loss of His favour. A body of sixteen commissioners was selected from the ministers, who were to sit monthly at Edinburgh, under the name of the "Council of the Church;" their duty was to provide, according to the ancient phrase, "*Ne quid Ecclesia detrimenti caperet;*" and through them a constant correspondence was kept up with all parts of the realm.¹

These proceedings alarmed the king, who could see no good grounds for the erection of so formidable a machinery against what he deemed an imaginary attack, and directed some members of his privy-council to hold a meeting with the more moderate ministers, and persuade them of the groundlessness of their apprehensions. If, he said, the three earls were repentant; if they had already suffered exile and were solicitous to hear the truth and return to their country and the bosom of the Church, why should he, their prince, be precluded from the exercise of mercy, the brightest jewel in his prerogative? and why, above all, should the Church, whose doors ought ever to stand open to returning penitents, shut them remorselessly in their faces, and consign them to darkness and despair?

These sentiments of the king were as politic as they were merciful; for in the present state of the kingdom, considering Elizabeth's advanced age and the power of the Roman Catholics in England, as well as in his own dominions, nothing could have been more unfavourable to his title of succession than to have become a religious persecutor. Indeed, the arguments of the more violent amongst the ministers were revolting and absurd. The crime of which the Catholic earls had been guilty (so they reasoned) was of that atrocious nature which rendered pardon by the civil power impossible. They were idolaters, and must die the death; though,

upon repentance, they might be absolved by the Kirk from the sentence of spiritual death.² Such a merciless mode of reasoning, proceeding, as Spottiswood has remarked, rather from "passion than any good zeal," greatly disgusted the king; who perceived that, under the alleged necessity of watching over the purity of the faith, the Kirk were erecting a tribunal independent alike of the law and the throne. Nor did James conceal these sentiments; inveighing bitterly against the ministers, both in public and private, at council and table. It was in vain that some of the brethren (for here, as in all other popular factions, there was a more moderate party, who were dragged forward and hustled into excesses by the more violent) entreated him to explain the causes of his offence, and declared their anxiety for an agreement. "As to agreement," said the monarch, "never will there be an agreement as long as the limits of the two jurisdictions, the civil and the ecclesiastical, are so vague and undistinguishable. The lines must be strongly and clearly drawn. In your preachings, your license is intolerable; you censure both prince, estate, and council; you convoke General Assemblies without my authority; you pass laws under the allegation that they are purely ecclesiastical, but which interfere with my prerogative, and restrict the decisions of my council and my judges. To these my allowance or approbation is never required; and under the general head of 'scandal,' your synods and presbyteries fulminate the most bitter personal attacks, and draw within the sphere of their censure every conceivable grievance. To think of agreement under such circumstances is vain; even if made, it could not last for a moment."³

In the midst of all this, and when the feelings of the king and the clergy were in a state of high excitement, Mr David Black, one of the ministers of St Andrews, a fierce Puritan, delivered a discourse in which he not only animadverted on the threatened triumph of idolatry

¹ Spottiswood, p. 418.

² Spottiswood, pp. 418, 419.

³ Ibid., p. 419.

at home, but raised his voice against the prelacy which had established itself in the neighbouring kingdom. The Queen of England, he said, was an atheist; the religion professed in that kingdom nothing better than an empty show, guided by the injunctions of the bishops; and not content with this pageant at home, they were now persuading the king to set it up in Scotland. As for his highness, none knew better than he did of the meditated return of these Papist earls; and herein he was guilty of manifest treachery. But what could they look for? Was not Satan the head of both court and council? Were not all kings devil's bairns? Was not Satan in the court, in the guiders of the court, in the head of the court? Were not the lords of Session miscreants and bribers, the nobility cormorants, and the Queen of Scotland a woman whom, for fashion's sake, they might pray for, but in whose time it was vain to hope for good?

This insolent attack was followed, as might have been expected, by an indignant complaint of Bowes, the English ambassador; and the offender was immediately cited to appear before the privy-council. To obey this summons, however, would have been construed into an abandonment of the highest privileges of the Kirk; and Black at once declined the jurisdiction of the tribunal. His "Declinator" is an extraordinary paper, and, by the high tone which it assumed, fully justified all the apprehensions of the king. "Albeit," said he, addressing the king and council, "I am ready, by the assistance of the grace of God, to give a confession, and to stand to the defence of every point of the truth of God, uttered by me, either by opening up of this word, or application thereof, before your majesty or council; . . . yet, seeing I am brought at this time to stand before your majesty and council, as a judge set to cognosce and discern upon my doctrine, where-

through my answering to the said pretended accusation might import with the manifest prejudice of the liberties of the Kirk, and acknowledging also of your majesty's jurisdiction in matters that are mere spiritual, which might move your majesty to attempt farther in the spiritual government of the Kirk of God: . . . Therefore (so he continued) I am constrained, in all humility and submission of mind, to use a *declinature* of the judgment, at least in *prima instantia*, for the following reasons: First, the Lord Jesus, the God of order and not of confusion, as appeared most evidently in all the Kirks of His saints, (of whom only I have the grace of my calling, as His ambassador, albeit most unworthy of that honour to bear His name amongst the saints,) He has given me His Word, and no law nor tradition of man, as the only instructions whereby I should rule the whole actions of my calling in preaching of the Word, administering of the seals thereof, and exercising of the discipline: and in discharge of this commission I cannot fall in the reverence of any evil law of man, but in so far as I shall be found past the compass of my instructions; which cannot be judged accordingly to that order established by that God of order, but [except] by the prophets, whose lips He hath appointed to be the keepers of His heavenly wisdom, and to whom He hath subjected the spirit of the prophets. And now, seeing it is the preaching of the Word whereon I am accused, which is a principal point of my calling, of necessity the prophets must first declare whether I have kept the bounds of my direction, before I come to be judged of your majesty: which being done, and I found culpable in transgressing any point of that commission which the Lord has given me, I refuse not to abide your majesty's judgment in the second instance, and to undergo whatsoever punishment it shall be found I have deserved.

"Secondly, because the liberty of the Kirk, and the whole discipline thereof, according as the same has been, and is presently exercised within

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Effect of Information against Mr David Black. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 128. Also, ibid. Process against Mr David Black, December 9, 1596.

your majesty's realm; has been confirmed by divers acts of parliament, and approved in the Confession of Faith, by the subscription and acts of your majesty, and of your majesty's estate and the whole body of the country, and peaceably enjoyed by the office-bearers of the Kirk in all points, and namely in the foresaid point, anent the judicatory of the preaching of the Word *in prima instantia*, as the practice of late examples evidently will show: therefore, the question concerning my preaching, ought, first, according to the grounds and practice aforesaid, to be judged by the ecclesiastical senate."¹

This resolute refusal to submit himself to the judgment of the law greatly enraged the king, and convinced him that the time was come to make a stand against the exorbitant claims of the Kirk. It confirmed him, also, in his resolution to extend his favour to the Catholic earls, upon their due submission; and at all hazards to put down that spirit of dictation and interference which might have soon made the tyranny and license of the ministers intolerable. Having understood, therefore, that a copy of Mr Black's declinature had been sent by the commissioners of the Kirk to the various presbyteries throughout the kingdom for their signature, with letters commanding the cause to their assistance and prayers, James at once construed this into an act of mutiny; and by a public proclamation not only discharged the commissioners from holding any further meetings, but commanded them to leave the capital and repair within twenty-four hours to their flocks.² But this royal order they were in no temper to obey. They instantly convened, and, in the phrase used by their own historian, "laid their letters open before the Lord."³ The danger, they declared, was imminent; and the ministers of the city must instantly, in their pulpits, deal mightily with the power of the Word against the charge which commanded

them to desert their duty. As the spiritual jurisdiction flowed immediately from Christ, and could in no way proceed from a king or civil magistrate, so also the power to convene for the exercise of such jurisdiction came directly from Christ, and could neither be impeded nor controlled by any Christian prince. They declared, therefore, that they would not obey the proclamation, but remain together to watch over the safety of Christ's Church, now in extreme jeopardy; and sent an angry message to the "Octavians," the eight councillors who then managed the government, assuring them, that as the Kirk had been in peace and liberty on their coming to office, and was now plunged into the greatest troubles, they could not but hold them responsible for the late bitter attacks upon its privileges.

This accusation was indignantly repelled by Seton, the president of the Session; and from him the commissioners of the Kirk repaired to the king; who assured them, with greater mildness than some had expected, that if Black would withdraw his "Declinator" all could be well arranged: a proposal which the more moderate party in the Kirk anxiously advised to be adopted. "At this moment," they said, "the court stands in some awe of the Kirk; and our wisest plan is to make the best conditions we can. If we measure our strength with the king, we shall be found too weak, and may lose the ground we have gained." But others, more fierce and zealous, arraigned such counsels as Erastian, and worldly-wise. To renounce the least of their privileges would, they argued, be the sure way to lose them all; to stand to their ground the only way to prevail: it was God's cause; and He who had the hearts of princes in His hand would maintain it.⁴

These counsels prevailed. The monarch, irritated by the rejection of his offer, commanded the trial of Black to proceed. So anxious, however, was he to avoid extremities, that after the judges had pronounced their opinion

¹ MS., State-paper Office, David Black's Declaration to the King's Majesty and Council, November 22, 1596. Calderwood, p. 337.

² Calderwood, p. 341.

³ Ibid.
⁴ Calderwood, pp. 340. 341. Spottiswoode, p. 423.

that the matters charged against him amounted, if proved, to treason, and were within the jurisdiction of the king and council, he deferred the trial till next day; and in the interval sent for some of the ministers, with the hope that, even at this latest hour, some mutual concessions might lead to peace. It had been reported to him, he said, that they were in terror lest their spiritual jurisdiction should be invaded; but nothing could be further from his mind than any abridgment of the liberties of the Kirk; and he was ready, by a public declaration on this point, to quiet their minds. "But," he continued, "this licentious manner of discoursing of affairs of state in the pulpit cannot be tolerated. My claim is only to judge in matters of sedition, and other civil and criminal causes, and of speeches that may import such crimes, wheresoever they may be uttered,—in the pulpit or elsewhere: for surely, if treason and sedition be crimes, much more are they so if committed in the pulpit, where the Word of Truth alone should be taught and heard."

To this some of the ministers replied, that they did not plead for the privilege of place, but for respect due to their message, which was received from God, and far above the control of any civil judicature. "Most true," said James; "and would you keep to your message, there would and could be no strife. But I trust your message be not to rule estates, and, when matters dislike you, to stir the people to sedition, making both me and my counsellors odious by your railings."—"If any dare do so," said the champion of the Kirk, "and have passed the bounds, it is reason he be punished with all extremity; but this question of his having passed the bounds must be judged by the Church." "And shall not I," said the king, with some asperity, "have power to call and punish a minister that breaketh out in treasonable speeches, but must come to your presbytery and be a complainer? I have had good proof already what justice ye will do me;

and were this a doubtful case, where by any colour the speeches might be justified, there might be some excuse for saying the minister should be convicted by his brethren; but here, what says Mr Black? 'All kings are devil's baorns; the treachery of the king's heart is discovered.' Who sees not that this man hath passed his bounds? Who will say he hath kept to his message?"

It was easier to demur to this than to answer it; and so convinced were the ministers at the moment of the reasonableness of the king's desires, that, after much conference and cavilling, they agreed to withdraw from the contest, till the limits between the civil and spiritual jurisdictions should be discussed and decided in a lawful General Assembly. On his side, also, James relaxed in the rigour of his requisitions. He was content, he said, that Black should be brought to his presence; and on his admission or denial of the truth of the accusations, be judged by three of his own brethren,—Mr David Lindsay, Mr James Nicolson, and Mr Thomas Buchanan. Matters were now on the very eve of an amicable adjustment, when it was unfortunately suggested to the king, that by this mode of settlement he would compromise his dignity, and that of his consort, unless Mr Black first acknowledged his offence against the queen. From such a proceeding the indignant minister revolted. He would plead to no offence, he said; for he was guilty of none. The court before whom he had been tried had evinced the most shameless injustice; had refused the most unexceptionable witnesses, who would have amply proved his innocence. Provost, bailies, rectors, deans, principals, and regents of colleges, had been ready to testify in his favour; and the judges had admitted in their place the evidence of ignorant and partial persons, whom it was impossible to believe. Come what might, he would never plead before a civil tribunal for an alleged spiritual delinquency; but if the monarch chose to remit him to his lawful judge, the ecclesiastical senate, he would declare

the truth, and, if found guilty, cheerfully submit to its censure.¹

This second declinature enraged the king even more than the first; and having summoned his council, he commanded the trial to proceed; but no prisoner appeared. The depositions of the witnesses were then read; and Black, in absence, was found guilty of having falsely and treasonably slandered the king, the queen his royal consort, his neighbour princess the Queen of England, and the Lords of Council and Session. It was left to the king to name the due punishment for such offences; but till the royal pleasure were known, he was sentenced to be confined beyond the North Water, and within six days to enter his person in ward.² Yet although armed by this sentence, and holding the sword of the civil power over the heads of the guilty, James arrested its descent, and to the last shewed an anxiety for a compromise. The punishment of Black, he said, should be of the lightest kind; and no ministers should be called before the privy council till it had been found in a General Assembly that the king might judge whether they passed the bounds in doctrine. Meanwhile, the acts of council so obnoxious to the brethren should be deleted, the offensive proclamations amended, and every reasonable safeguard provided against the alleged encroachments upon the liberties of the Kirk.

These amicable feelings were unfortunately construed rather into an admission of weakness than a desire for peace; and the commissioners of the Kirk, sternly refusing to abate an atom of their demands, declared that no punishment could be inflicted on a man who had not yet been tried. On the other hand, it was urged by Seton, president of the Session, and one of the Octavians, that unless some punishment followed the sentence pronounced upon Black, the king could never make that process a good ground for claiming the jurisdiction over the ministers. The two antagonists, there-

fore, the Kirk and the Crown, found themselves, after these protracted overtures, more mortally opposed to each other than before. The Kirk, protesting that every effort had failed to obtain redress for the wrongs offered to Christ's kingdom, proclaimed a fast; commanded all faithful pastors to betake themselves to their spiritual armour; caused "the doctrine," to use the phrase of these times, "to sound mightily;" and protested that, "whatever might be the consequences, they were free of his majesty's blood."³

The king received this announcement with the utmost scorn, commanded the commissioners instantly to depart the city, ordered Black to enter into ward, and published a declaration, in which he exposed, in forcible and indignant terms, the unreasonable demands of the Kirk. "Out of an earnest desire," he said, "to keep peace with the ministers, he had agreed to wave all inquiry into 'past causes,' till the unhappy differences between the civil and ecclesiastical tribunal had been removed by the judgment of a convention of estates and a General Assembly of the ministry. All that he had asked in return was, that his proceedings should not be made a subject of pulpit attack and bitter ecclesiastical railing: instead of listening to which request, they had vilified him in their sermons, accused him of persecution, defended Black, and falsely held him up to his people as the enemy of all godliness. In the face of all such slander and defamation, he now declared to his good subjects, that as it was his determination on the one hand to maintain religion and the discipline of the Church as established by law, so, on the other, he was resolved to enforce upon all his people, ministers of the Kirk as well as others, that obedience to the laws and reverence for the throne, without which no Christian kingdom could hold together. For this purpose certain bonds were in preparation, which the ministers should be required to subscribe, under

¹ Calderwood, p. 351. Spottiswood, p. 425.

² Ibid. p. 427.

³ Calderwood, pp. 356, 360. Spottiswood, p. 426.

the penalty of a sequestration of their property.”¹

Meanwhile, the commissioners having retired from the city, a short breathing time was allowed; and Secretary Lindsay, trusting that the ministers of Edinburgh might now be more tractable than their brethren, prevailed on the king to send for them. As a preliminary to all accommodation, they insisted that the commissioners should be recalled; and the king, relaxing in his rigour, appeared on the point of acceding to their wishes, when some of the “*Cubiculars*,” as the lords of the bed-chamber and gentlemen of the household were called, interposed their ill offices to prevent an agreement. These ambitious and intriguing men had long envied and hated the Octavians, and had hoped, under colour of the recent dissensions in the Church, to procure their disgrace and dismissal. Nothing could be more unfavourable to such a plot than peace between the king and the Kirk; nothing more essential to its success than to fan the flame and stir the elements of discord. This they now set about with diabolical ingenuity. They laboured to make the Octavians odious to the party of the Protestant barons and the ministers. They assured them, that all the hot persecution of Mr Black arose from this hydra-headed crew, of whom they knew the leaders to be Papists. They insinuated to the Octavians that the animosity of their enemies in the Kirk was so implacable as to throw their lives into jeopardy; and they abused the king’s ear, to whom their office gave them unlimited access, by tales against the citizens of Edinburgh, who mounted guard every night, as they affirmed, over the houses of their ministers, lest their lives should fall a sacrifice to the unmitigable rage of their sovereign.

By these abominable artifices, the single end of which was to destroy the government of the Octavians, the hopes of peace were entirely blasted; and the little lull which had succeeded the retirement of the commissioners was followed by a more terrific tempest than

had yet occurred. The king, incensed at the conduct of the citizens and the suspicion which it implied, commanded twenty-four of the most zealous burgesses to leave the capital within six hours; a proceeding which enraged the ministers, whose indignation blazed to the highest pitch when they received an anonymous letter, assuring them that Huntly had been that night closeted with James. The information was false, and turned out to be an artifice of the “*Cubiculars*;” but it had the effect intended, for all was now terror in the Kirk. Balcanquel flew to the pulpit; and after a general discourse on some text of the Canticles, plunged into the present troubles of the Kirk, arraigned the “treacherous forms” of which they had been made the victims; and turning to the noblemen and barons who were his auditors, reminded them, in glowing language, of the deeds of their ancestors in defence of the truth: exhorting them not to disgrace their fathers, but to meet the ministers forthwith in the Little Church. To this quarter so great a crowd now rushed, that the clergy could not make their entrance; but Mr Robert Bruce, pressing forward, at last reached the table where the Protestant barons were seated, and warning them of the imminent perils which hung over their heads, the return of the Papist earls, the persecution of Black, the banishment of the commissioners and the citizens, conjured them to bestir themselves and intercede with the king.²

For this purpose, Lords Lindsay and Forbes, with the Lairds of Barganie and Balquhan, and the two ministers, Bruce and Watson, sought the royal presence, then not far off; for the king was at that moment sitting in the Upper Tolbooth with some of his privy-council, while the judges of the Session were assembled in the Lower House. On being admitted with the rest, Bruce informed the monarch that they were sent by the noblemen and barons then convened, to bemoan and avert the dangers threatened to religion. “What dangers?” said James. “I see none; and who dares convene, contrary to

¹ Spottiswood, p. 426.

² Spottiswood, p. 427.

my proclamation?"—"Dares!" retorted the fierce Lord Lindsay: "we dare more than that; and shall not suffer the truth to be overthrown, and stand tamely by." As he said this the clamour increased; numbers were thronging unmannerly into the presence-chamber, and the king, starting up in alarm, and without giving any answer, retreated down stairs to the Lower House, where the judges were assembled, and commanded the doors to be shut. The Protestant lords and ministers upon this returned to the Little Kirk, where the multitude had been addressed, during their absence, by Mr Michael Cranston, who had read to them the history of Haman and Mordecai. This story had worked them up to a point that prepared them for any mischief; and when they heard that the king had turned his back upon their messengers, they became furious with rage and disappointment. Some, dreading the worst, desired to separate; but Lindsay's lion voice was heard above the clamour, forbidding them to disperse. Shouts now arose, to force the doors and bring out the wicked Haman; others cried out, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon;" and in the midst of the confusion, an agent of the courtiers, or, as Calderwood terms him, "a messenger of Satan sent by the Cubiculars," vociferated, "Armour, armour! save yourselves. Fy, fy! bills and axes!" The people now rose in arms; some rushing one way, some another. Some, thinking the king was laid hands on, ran to the Tolbooth; some, believing that their ministers were being butchered, flew to the Kirk; others thundered with their axes and weapons on the Tolbooth doors, calling for President Seton, Mr Elphinstone, and Mr Thomas Hamilton, to be given up to them, that they might take order with them as abusers of the king and the Kirk. At this moment, had not a brave deacon of the craftsmen, named Wat, with a small guard, beat them back, the gate would have been forced, and none could have answered for the consequences. But at last the provost, Sir Alexander Hume, whom the shouts of the uproar

had reached as he lay on a sick bed, seizing his sword, rushed in, all haggard and pale, amongst the citizens, and with difficulty appeased them into a temporary calm.

James, who was greatly alarmed, now sent the Earl of Mar to remonstrate with the ministers, whom he found pacing up and down, disconsolately, behind the church, lamenting the tumult, and excusing their own part. On being remonstrated with by Mar, all that they required, they said, was the abolition of the acts done in prejudice of the Kirk during the last four weeks; that the president, comptroller, and advocate, men suspected in religion, and enemies to the truth, should have no voice in ecclesiastical matters; and that the good citizens who had been banished should be recalled. These demands being reported, the monarch promised to lay them, when put into proper form, before his council; and seizing the moment of tranquillity, ventured to open the doors of the Lower Tolbooth, and accompanied by the provost, bailies, and Octavians, slipt quietly into the street, and proceeded to his palace at Holyrood.

Here at last there was safety; and his courage reviving, James expressed himself with the utmost indignation against the ministers and leaders of the late tumult; vowing that they, the town, the barons, and every living soul connected with the recent disgraceful scenes, should bitterly repent them. These sentiments were encouraged by the councillors; and next morning the king and his whole court, at an early hour, left the city for Linlithgow. Scarcely had they departed when a herald, appearing at the Cross, read a proclamation which struck dismay into the hearts of the people. It described the treasonable uproar of the preceding day, which had been raised by the factious ministers of Edinburgh, who, it stated, after having uttered most seditious speeches in pulpit, had assembled with the noblemen, barons, and others; had sent an irreverent message to their sovereign, persuaded the citizens to take arms, and put his

majesty's life in jeopardy. Such treasonable conduct, it declared, had convinced the king that the capital was no longer a fit place for his own residence, or for the ministration of justice; he had therefore himself left it with his court, and now commanded the lords of Session, sheriffs, and all other officers of justice, to remove themselves forth of the town of Edinburgh, and be ready to repair to such other place as should be appointed. At the same time he ordered all noblemen and barons to depart instantly to their own houses, and to forbear any further assembly till they had received the royal permission.¹

This proclamation had an immediate effect, and caused a great alteration. Men looked sadly and despondingly on each other. The craftsmen and burgesses foretold the utter decay of their town and trade. All seemed in despair; but nothing could intimidate the Kirkmen; and Mr Robert Bruce, one of their principal leaders, ascending the pulpit, upbraided them with their pusillanimity. "A day," said he, "a day of trial and terror is at hand. The hypocrisy of many, the flagrant iniquity of others, will clearly appear. The trial shall go through all men: from king and queen to council and nobility, from session to barons, from barons to burgesses, from burgesses to the meanest craftsmen, all will be sifted; and sorry am I that I should see such weakness in so many, that ye dare not utter so much as one word for God's glory and the good cause. It is not we that are parties in this cause. No: the quarrel is betwixt a greater Prince and us. We are but silly men and unworthy creatures. But it hath pleased Him who ruleth all things, to set us in this office, and to make us His own mouth, that we should oppose the manifest usurpation intended against His spiritual kingdom; and sorry am I that our cause should be obscured by this late tumult, and that the enemies should be thereby emboldened to pull the crown off Christ's head."²

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 429, 430.

² Calderwood, p. 366.

After this stirring address, Lord Hamilton was secretly invited to place himself at the head of the godly barons and other gentlemen, who had embraced the cause of the Kirk; and a proposal was made for the excommunication of Seton, the president of the Session, and Hamilton, the lord-advocate; but in the end it was deemed advisable to defer this awful process to the General Assembly, when these offenders might, with greater solemnity, be delivered over to Satan. Meanwhile a fast was proclaimed; and Mr John Welsh, one of the ministers, thundered from one of the city pulpits an extraordinary philippic against the king; taking for his general subject the epistle sent to the angel of the Church at Ephesus. His majesty, he said, had been possessed with a devil; and one devil having been put out, seven worse spirits were entered in his place. He was, in fact, in a state of frenzy; and it was lawful for the subjects to rise against him, and take the sword out of his hand; just as a father of a family, if visited with insanity, might be seized by his children and servants, and tied hand and foot. An execrable doctrine, justly observes Spottiswood, which was yet received by many of the hearers as a sound application.

This insolent attack was scarcely made when Lord Hamilton, who had at first received the messenger of the Kirk with courtesy, suddenly rode to Linlithgow, and put into the king's hands the letter addressed him by the ministers. It was construed into a direct incitement to rebellion; and certainly its terms went far that way. Addressing themselves to this nobleman, the brethren presumed, they said, that his lordship was aware of the long conference between his majesty and them; many concurrences, and as many breaks, in which, at last, the malice of some councillors had come to this, that their stipends were discharged; the commissioners of the General Assembly banished; Mr David Black convicted of treason, and warded; themselves appointed to suffer the like; and now, at last, a great number

of their flock, who had stood in their defence, expelled from the town. They proceeded to state that the people, in this crisis, animated, no doubt, by the Word of God's Spirit, took arms; and, unless restrained by their ministers, would, in their fury, have lighted upon many of the councillors, who were threatening destruction, as they believed, to religion and government. The letter stated, that the godly barons, with other gentlemen who were in the town, had convened themselves; they had taken upon them the "*Patrony*" of the Kirk and her cause; but they lacked a head, and specially a nobleman to countenance the matter, and with one consent had made choice of Lord Hamilton. "And seeing," so the ministers concluded their inflammatory epistle, "God has given your lordship this honour, we could do no less than to follow His calling, and make it known to you, that with all convenient diligence you might come here, utter your affection to the good cause, and receive the honour which is offered you."¹

This letter was subscribed by the leading ministers of the Kirk,—Bruce, Balcanquel, Rollock, Balfour, and Watson; but the great nobleman to whom it was addressed, resisted the dangerous pre-eminence, and highly offended the Kirk by now placing it in the king's hands, who was not slow to take advantage of the discovery. In truth, the tumult recently committed by the citizens, and the part which had been acted in it by the clergy, was a prodigious advantage given to the monarch, who quickly perceived it. He was well aware of the difficulty of dealing with the ministers, as long as they confined themselves to their political attacks in the pulpit, and pleaded an independent jurisdiction; but the citizens and baileys were unquestionably amenable to the authority of the crown and the laws. They were, with scarcely a single exception, Protestants; warmly attached to the Kirk, and a principal element in its power. All this the king knew; and when he saw that he had them within

his grasp, he determined they should feel the full weight of his resentment. It was in vain that the citizens sought to appease the royal wrath, and dispatched the humblest messages to implore its removal, and invite their sovereign back to his capital. The envoys were refused access; the provost was commanded to imprison the ministers, who were accused of having instigated a tumult which had endangered the life of their prince; the outrage was declared treason by an act of council; the capital was pronounced unsafe; the nobility and gentry interdicted from resorting thither; the inferior judicatories and the supreme court removed; and the ominous answer returned by the king to the citizens, that he meant ere long to come to Edinburgh in person, and let them know that he was their sovereign.

To enforce this, James summoned his Highland nobles with their fierce attendants, and his Border barons with their lawless followers. Dark surmises ran through the court, and soon reached the startled ears of the townsmen, that their city was doomed to indiscriminate pillage; it was to be sacked, perhaps razed, and sown with salt. Will of Kinmont, it was said, was to be let loose upon it; and his name always formidable, and now more notorious from his recent escape, struck terror into the hearts of the burghers. It was in vain that the ministers attempted to rally the courage of their flocks, spoke of excommunicating their enemies in the council, and drew up a bond for the defence of religion. The magistrates refused to subscribe it; the craftsmen, torn between their love of gain and their devotion to sound doctrine, began to look coldly and doubtfully upon their pastors; and the four clergymen, who had taken the most active part in the tumult, dreading an arrest, fled by night to Newcastle.² But these were not the days when the artisans and merchants of a feudal capital were subjects of easy plunder. All had arms, and knew well how to use them; and the shops,

¹ Warrender MSS., vol. B. p. 246.

² Spottiswood, p. 431.

booths, and warehouses, were soon emptied of their goods, which were stowed away in the strongest houses of the town. The sturdy proprietors then took to their weapons, mounted guard over their stores, and determined that neither "*catherans*" nor borderers should spoil them without a bloody struggle.¹

On the 1st January, the dreaded entry of the monarch took place. The streets and gates had, early in the morning, been occupied by the various chiefs and clans appointed for the purpose. The provost and magistrates delivered the keys of the city on their knees to the king; professed their deep sorrow for the late tumult, of which, they declared, they were individually guiltless; and solicited the strictest scrutiny into the whole. As to the inflammatory sermons, and the conduct of their ministers who had been recently outlawed, they should, they said, never be readmitted to their charge without the permission of the king; and at the next election of the civic authorities, such persons only should be chosen as had previously been approved of by the crown.² James then proceeded to the High Church, heard a sermon from Mr David Lindsay, and made an oration to the people, in which he justified himself, cleared his councillors, and deeply blamed the ministers.³ He spoke of his own early education in the reformed religion; his solemn determination to maintain it; to extirpate from his realm all unrepentant idolaters, and to provide for the preaching of God's Word, which had been silent in the capitals since the flight of those unworthy pastors who had profaned the pulpits by their seditious harangues. Having thus somewhat reassured the trembling citizens, he deemed that he had gone far enough for the present; and not only declined accepting their offers of submission, but at a succeeding convention of estates, held at Holyrood, anew de-

clared the tumult to be treason, intimated his resolution to prosecute the town criminally, and commanded the provost and bailies to enter their persons in ward, within the town of Perth, before the 1st of February; to remain there in durance till acquitted, or found guilty of the uproar.⁴ The sword was thus kept suspended over the heads of the unhappy magistrates and their capital; and it was quite apparent that the king, having become convinced of his own strength, was determined to defer the moment of mercy till he had accomplished some great purpose which now filled his mind.

This was nothing less than the establishment of Episcopacy. The recent excesses of the more violent ministers had made the deepest impression upon the monarch; and it was evident to him, that if the principles of independent jurisdiction which they had not hesitated to adopt, were preached and acted upon, there must ensue a perpetual collision between the ecclesiastical and civil authorities. He longed, therefore, to use the words of Spottiswood, to see "a decent order established in the Kirk, which should be consistent with the Word of God, the custom of primitive times, and the laws of the realm;" and he believed that no fitter moment could occur to carry this great object than the present. His first step was to summon a General Assembly of the church to meet at Perth on the last of February. His next was an act of conciliation. The eight councillors who, under the name of Octavians, had, for the last eighteen months, managed the financial department of the state, and indirectly controlled every part of the government, had been especially obnoxious to the Protestant clergy, and to a section of the courtiers and bed-chamber lords. They were hated by the ministers, who suspected them to be mostly concealed Roman Catholics by the *Cubiculars*, as the courtiers were called, because they had curtailed their perquisites, and intro-

¹ Birrel's Diary.

² Maitland, voi. ii., p. 1278.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Cecil, January 4, 1596.

⁴ Spottiswood, p. 433.

duced a strict economy; and the king, by accepting their resignations, believed that he would popularise his intended ecclesiastical innovations.¹ These changes he now prefaced by drawing up and circulating amongst the different synods and presbyteries, no less than fifty-five questions, involving the most important points in dispute between himself and his clergy; not, as he solemnly declared, for the purpose of troubling the peace of the Kirk by thorny disputes, but to have its polity cleared, its corruptions eradicated, and a pleasant harmony established between himself and its ministers.² The spirit and tendency of these questions gave great alarm to the brethren. The king inquired whether matters of external ecclesiastical regimen might not be disputed, *salvā fide et religione*; whether the prince by himself, or the pastors by themselves, or both conjunctly, should establish the acts concerning the government of the Kirk; whether the consent of a majority of the flock, and also of the patron, was necessary in the election of pastors; whether there could be a lawful minister without *impositio manuum*; whether pastors should be permitted to allude by name to councillors and magistrates in the pulpit, or to describe them so minutely as to leave no doubt whom they meant, although the parties so attacked were guiltless of notorious vices, and had not been previously admonished; whether the pastors should be confined to the doctrine directly flowing from his text, or might preach all things on all texts; whether the General Assembly of the Kirk might be convoked without consent of the prince, he being *pius et Christianus Magistratus*; whether it were lawful to excommunicate such Papists as had never professed the reformed faith; whether a Christian prince had power to annul a notoriously unjust sentence of excommunication, and to amend such disorders as might occur either by pastors failing in their duties, or

by one jurisdiction usurping the province of another; whether Fasts for general causes might be proclaimed without the command of the prince; whether any causes infringing upon the civil jurisdiction, or interfering with vested private rights, might be disputed and ruled in the ecclesiastical courts; and whether the civil magistrate had not a full right to stay all such proceedings?³

These searching interrogatories were received with no inconsiderable dismay by the clergy. They took great offence that their forms of ecclesiastical polity, which they considered irreversibly fixed by act of parliament, and founded, as they contended, on the Word of God, which had been so highly eulogised also by the king in 1592, should be called in question. They saw how acutely the questions had been drawn up; how deeply they touched the independence of the Kirk; what a total revolution and alienation the late excesses of the ministers had occasioned in the mind of the sovereign, and how earnest and determined he seemed in the whole matter.

All this demanded instant vigilance and resistance. Many private conferences were held; and in the end of February the brethren of the synod of Fife convened at St Andrews, where, after "tossing of the king's questions for sundry days," they drew up their replies, which, as was to be expected, ruled everything in favour of the Kirk, and resisted every claim on the part of the king. Some of these answers are remarkable, and seem to shew that the principles then laid down were incompatible with the existence of civil government. Thus, the first question, Whether matters concerning the external government of the Kirk might not be debated *salvā fide et religione*? was met by a peremptory negative; on the second, they were equally positive that the king had no voice in the discussion or establishment of any acts relating to Church government. All the acts of the Kirk (so was their response worded) ought to be established by the Word

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, Jan. 13, 1596-7.

² Spottiswood, p. 434.

³ Spottiswood, pp. 435, 436.

of God. Of this Word the ordinary interpreters were the pastors and doctors of the Kirk; the extraordinary expounders, such as were called for in times of corruption, were the prophets, or such men as were endowed by God with extraordinary gifts; and kings and princes had nothing to do but to ratify and vindicate, by their civil sanctions, that which these pastors and prophets had authoritatively declared.¹ As to the indecent and scurilous practice of inveighing against particular men and councillors by name in the pulpit, they defended its adoption by what they termed apostolic authority. "The canon," said they, "of the Apostle is clear: 'They that sin publicly, rebuke publicly, that the rest may fear;' and so much the more if the public sin be in a public person." On other points they were equally clear and decided in favour of their own practices and pretensions. All things, they contended, might be spoken on all texts; and if the minister travelled from his subject, he was only following the express directions of Paul to Timothy. The General Assembly might be convened without the authority of the king, because the officers of the Kirk received their place and warrant directly from Christ, and not from any temporal prince; and the acts passed in that Assembly were undoubtedly valid, although carried against the royal will. On this question their reasoning was extraordinary: "The king," they contended, "should consent to, and give a legal sanction to all acts passed in the Assembly; and why? Because the acts of the Assembly have sufficient authority from Christ, who has promised, that whatever shall be agreed upon on earth by two or three convened in his name, shall be ratified in heaven,—a warrant to which no temporal king or prince can lay claim: and so," it continues, "the acts and constitutions of the Kirk are of higher authority than those of any earthly king; yea, they should command and overrule kings, whose greatest honour should be to be members, nursing fathers, and ser-

vants to this king Christ Jesus, and his house and queen the Kirk."² To pursue the answers is unnecessary, enough having been given to shew their general tendency. But the courage of the synod of Fife, by whom these stout replies were drawn up, did not pervade the whole body of the Kirk; and the king, who managed the affair with his usual acuteness and dexterity, succeeded in procuring a majority in the General Assembly, and ultimately carrying his own views.

This James appears to have effected by holding out hopes of preferment to those who were wavering, and packing the General Assembly with a large majority of north-country ministers, who were generally esteemed more lukewarm Presbyterians and more devoted courtiers than their lowland brethren. Sir Patrick Murray, a gentleman of the bed-chamber, had been sent for this purpose into the north; and was so successful in his mission, that when the Assembly met at Perth the king found them in a more placable and conciliatory mood than could have been anticipated. It was declared, after some sharp discussion, a lawful Assembly; having power not only to debate, but to conclude such questions as should be brought before them. The royal commissioners, Sir John Cockburn, Sir John Preston, and Mr Edward Bruce, then presented thirteen articles, which embraced the principal points of dispute already included by the king in his original queries; and a committee of the Assembly having been chosen to consider them, they gave in, next morning, a series of answers, which James pronounced unsatisfactory, and requested the members of Assembly to meet the estates for the purpose of a more full discussion. When they appeared, he observed that they must be well aware of the object for which he had desired their attendance. "My purpose," said he, "in calling you together, is to amend such things as are amiss, and to take away the questions that may move trouble afterwards. If you, for your parts, be willing to have matters

¹ Calderwood, pp. 382, 383.

² Calderwood, p. 386.

righted, things may yet go well. I claim nothing but what is due to every Christian king; that is, to be *Custos et Vindex Disciplinae*. Corruptions are crept in, and more are daily growing, by this liberty that preachers take in the application of their doctrine, and censuring everything that is not to their mind. This I must have amended; for such discourses serve only to move sedition, and raise tumults. Let the truth of God be taught in the chair of truth, and wickedness be reprobated; but in such sort as the offender may be bettered, and vice made more odious. To rail against men in pulpit, and express their names, as we know was done of late, there being no just cause, and to make the Word of God, which is ordained to guide men in the way of salvation, an instrument of sedition, is a sin, I am sure, beyond all other that can be committed on earth. Hold you within your limits, and I will never blame you, nor suffer others to work you any vexation. The civil government is committed to me. It is not your subject; nor are ye to meddle with it."¹

This peremptory mode of address overawed the Assembly; and after protesting that they had convened in that place only to evince their obedience to the sovereign, and in nowise consenting to submit matters ecclesiastical to a civil judicatory, they withdrew to their ordinary place of meeting, and prepared their amended answers; with which the king declared himself satisfied for the present. And he had good reason to be so; for he had already gained some principal points. It was agreed that the monarch, either by himself or his commissioners, might propose to the General Assembly any reformation or amendment in ecclesiastical matters connected with the external government of the Kirk; that no unusual conventions should be held amongst pastors without the royal consent; that the acts of the privy council, or the laws passed by the three estates, should not be attacked or discussed in the pulpit,

¹ Spottiswood, p. 440.

without remedy having been first sought from the king; that in the principal towns of the realm no minister should be chosen without consent of the king, and of the flock; and that no man should be by name rebuked in the pulpit, unless he had fled from justice, or were under sentence of excommunication.²

James's next step was to reconcile the Catholic lords to the Kirk; and he was here equally successful. He had already written a peremptory letter to Huntly, informing him that the time was come when he must either embrace the Protestant faith, remain in Scotland, and be restored to his honours and his estates; or leave his country for ever, if, as the king expressed it in his letter, his conscience were so "kittle"³ as to refuse these conditions; in which case, James added, "Look never to be a Scotsman again!" The letter concluded with these solemn words:—

"Deceive not yourself, to think that by lingering of time, your wife and your allies shall ever get you better conditions. I must love myself and my own estate better than all the world; and think not that I will suffer any professing a contrary religion to dwell in this land."⁴

The conditions presented to Huntly, Angus, and Errol, were, that after conference with the Presbyterian ministers, who should be careful to instruct them in the truth, they should acknowledge the Kirk of Scotland to be a true Church, become members of it, hear the Word, receive the sacraments, and be obedient to its discipline; and that they should banish all Jesuits and seminary priests from their company and estates, and subscribe the Confession of Faith. On the meeting of the General Assembly at Dundee, (10th May 1597,) the brethren who had been appointed for this purpose, reported that the earls had recanted their errors, subscribed the Confession

² Spottiswood, p. 441.

³ That is, so ticklish or tender.

⁴ Original in the king's hand, Warrender MSS. vol. A. p. 169. Printed by Spottiswood, with some words and sentences omitted.

of Faith, and so completely fulfilled all the conditions required of them, that nothing more remained, than the pleasing duty of receiving them once more into communion with the Kirk. But, at the very moment of reconciliation, it was found that Mr James Gordon, a Jesuit, had glided in disguise into the country of Huntly, and was busy in shaking his resolution; whilst a daring Catholic baron, named Barclay of Ladyland, seized and fortified Ailsa, a small island in the shape of a huge, rugged rock, off the coast of Ayr, with the design of delivering it to the Spaniards, who had promised to make a descent in that quarter. This desperate enterprise was defeated by Mr Andrew Knox, minister of Paisley, whose prowess had been shewn some five years before this, in seizing George Kerr with the Spanish Blanks.¹ With like success, this devoted member of the Kirk, having discovered Barclay's plot, girded on his sword; and taking boat, with a few daring assistants, attacked the traitor on his rock, and reduced him to such extremity, that rather than be taken alive he rushed into the sea, and in one moment choked both himself and his treason.²

This reverse confirmed the Catholic lords in their convictions; and the ceremony of their reconciliation to the Kirk, and restoration to their estates and honours, took place at Aberdeen in the end of June. As it was an event particularly acceptable to the king, and considered a great triumph by the Kirk, the proceedings were conducted with much solemnity. After a strict fast, held on Saturday the 25th of June, on which day the three earls, Huntly, Angus, and Errol, made up all deadly quarrels, and shook hands with their enemies, mutually imploring and receiving forgiveness; the congregation assembled on Sunday the 26th in the Old Kirk at Aberdeen, which was crowded with the noblemen, barons, and common people. In the main aisle was a table for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and

immediately before the sermon, the three earls rose from their places, and subscribed the Confession of Faith. The sermon followed, preached by Mr John Gledstanes; after which the earls rose, and with a loud voice made open confession of their late defection and apostasy, professing their present conviction of the truth of the Presbyterian faith, and their resolution to remain steadfast in the same. Huntly then declared before God, his majesty, and the Kirk, his deep penitence for the murder of the Earl of Moray; after which the three noble delinquents were absolved from the sentence of excommunication, and received by the ministers, the royal commissioner, and the provost and magistrates, into the bosom of the Kirk. A person in the dress of a penitent now threw himself on his knees before the pulpit: it was the Laird of Gicht, who implored pardon for his supporting Bothwell, and entreated to be released from his sentence of excommunication. All this was granted. The repentant earls then received the sacrament after the Presbyterian form; solemnly swore to keep good order in their wide and wild territories, executing justice, destroying "bangsters," and shewing themselves, in all respects, "good justiciars;" and, on the succeeding day, Marchmont Herald proclaimed their reconciliation by sound of trumpet at the Cross, which was hung with tapestry, and surrounded by multitudes, who shouted their joy, drank their healths, and tossed their glasses in the air.³

This success gave strength to the king's government, and encouraged James to go forward with his great ecclesiastical project; but he proceeded with caution, and took care not to alarm the Kirk by prematurely disclosing the full extent of his reforms. He had now secured in his interest a large party of the ministers; but the elements of democracy, and the hatred of anything approaching to a hierarchy, were still deeply rooted in the General

¹ *Supra*, p. 187.

² Spottiswood, p. 445. MS., State-paper Office, without date.

³ Thomas Mollison to Mr Robert Paip, Aberdeen, June 28, 1597. *Analecta Scotica*, p. 299

Assembly, and in the hearts of the people. Mr Andrew Melvil, principal of the college of St Andrews, a man singularly learned, ready in debate, sarcastic, audacious, and overbearing, led the popular party, with his nephew, James Melvil, who was warmly attached to the same principles, but of a gentler spirit. Many others assisted them; and the king, anxious to get rid of their opposition, proposed that, instead of the whole Assembly continuing its proceedings, a general commission should be granted to some of the wisest amongst the brethren, who might consult and co-operate with the monarch upon various matters of weight which concerned "not only particular flocks, but the whole estate and body of the Kirk."¹ This was agreed to. Fourteen ministers were chosen, most of whom were known to be favourable to the views of the court; and these, whom Calderwood the popular historian of the Kirk stigmatises as the "*king's led horse*," convened soon after at Falkland, where they summoned before them the presbytery of St Andrews, and gave a specimen of their new power, by reversing a judgment pronounced by the presbytery of St Andrews, and removing from their charge two ministers named Wallace and Black, who had profaned their pulpits by personal attack and vituperation. This was followed by a strict and searching visitation of the university of St Andrews, the stronghold of its rector, Mr Andrew Melvil, who in his office of principal had, as the king conceived, been too busy in disseminating amongst the students his favourite principles of ministerial parity and popular power. A new rector was elected; a certain mode of teaching prescribed to the several professors; and a more strict economy introduced into the disposal of the rents of the university, by the appointment of a financial council.

During the summer and autumn, James was busily occupied with the trial of witches, and an expedition to the Borders; in which last he acted

with great energy. Fourteen of the most notorious offenders were taken and hanged; thirty-six of the principal barons, who had encouraged their outrages, seized and brought prisoners to the capital; and Lord Ochiltree left as lieutenant and warden over the disturbed districts. Parliament now assembled, and opened with some proceedings on the part of the king, which shewed an alienation from England. In an oration to his nobility, he dwelt on the wrongs he had received in the execution of his mother; the interruption in the payment of his gratuity; the scornful answers returned to his temperate remonstrance; the unjust imputations of Elizabeth, who accused him of exciting Poland and Denmark against her, and fostering rebellion in Ireland. But what had most deeply offended him, was the attempt made recently in the English parliament to defeat his title to the throne of that kingdom; a subject upon which, owing to the daily reports of the shattered health of the queen, he had become more keenly sensitive than ever.² Against all this it was evident he now resolved to be timely on his guard; but in the meantime his mind was full of that great plan which had so long occupied it—the establishment of the order of bishops. For this all was now ripe; and when the commissioners of the Kirk laid their petition before parliament, one of its requisitions was found to be as follows:—"That the ministers, as representing the church and third estate of the kingdom, might be admitted to have a voice in parliament."

It was at once seen that under this application, which had been so artfully managed to come not from the king but the Kirk, the first step was made for restoring the order of bishops. The monarch, indeed, did not now deny it: he knew that he had a majority in the Assembly, and looked for an easy victory; but something of the ancient courage and fervour of Presbyterianism remained. Ferguson, now venerable from his age and ex-

¹ Calderwood, p. 409.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, George Nicolson to Sir R. Cecil, December 15, 1597.

perience, lifted up his testimony against the project for bringing his brethren into parliament. It was, he affirmed, a court stratagem; and if they suffered it to succeed, would be as fatal, from what it carried within its bowels, as the horse to the unhappy Trojans. "Let the words," said he, "of the Dardan prophetess ring in your ears, '*Equo ne credite Teucri!*'" Andrew Melvil, whom the court party had in vain attempted to exclude, argued against the petition in his wonted rapid and powerful style; and John Davison, tearing away from the king's speech, and the arguments of his adherents, the thin veil with which their ultimate design was covered, pointed, in a strain of witty and biting irony, to the future bench of bishops, and their primate at their head. "Busk him, busk him," said he, "as bonnilie as ye can, and fetch him in as fairly as ye will—we ken him weel eneuch; we see the horns of his mitre."¹ But these were insulated efforts, and had so little effect, that the king, without difficulty, procured an act to be passed, which declared, "That such pastors and ministers as the crown provided to the place and dignity of a bishop, abbot, or other prelate, should have voice in parliament as freely as any other ecclesiastical prelate had in any former age."²

A General Assembly was soon after convened, in which the subject was solemnly argued in the king's presence, first by a committee of brethren, and afterwards by the whole church.³ As a preparation for this, James had tried every method of conciliation. He had extended his forgiveness to the ministers of Edinburgh for their part in the late tumult: he had restored their privileges, and the comfort of his royal presence and pardon, to the magistrates and the citizens of the capital; not, however, without having first imposed on them a heavy fine. To those stern and courageous supporters of the Presbyterian establish-

ment, whose presence he dreaded, other methods were used. Mr Andrew Melvil, who pleaded a right to be present in the Assembly, as he had a "doctoral charge in the Kirk," was commanded, under pain of treason, to leave the city; others, whose subserviency was doubtful, were wearied out and induced to retire by lengthened preliminary discussions; and at last the king opened his great project in a studied harangue. He dwelt on his constant care to adorn and favour the Kirk, to remove controversies, restore discipline, and increase its patrimony. All, he said, was in a fair road to success; but in order to ensure it and perfect the reform, it was absolutely requisite that ministers should have a vote in parliament, without which the Kirk could not be saved from falling into poverty and contempt. "I mean not," said he, emphatically, "to bring in Papistical or Anglican bishops, but only that the best and wisest of the ministry should be selected by your Assembly to have a place in council and parliament, to sit upon their own affairs, and not to stand always at the door like poor supplicants, utterly despised and disregarded."⁴ A keen argument followed. Mr James Melvil, Davison, Bruce, Carmichael, and Aird, all devoted and talented ministers, spoke against the project, and denounced it in the strongest language. On the other side, the brunt of the battle, in its defence, fell on Gledstanes, and the king himself, no mean adept in ecclesiastical polemics; but, if we may believe Calderwood, the main element of success was the presence of the northern brethren, whom this historian describes as a sad, subservient rabble, led by Mr Gilbert Bodie, "a drunken Orkney ass," whose name described their character: all being for the body, with small regard to the spirit.⁵ In the end the question was carried by a majority of ten: the Assembly finding that it was expedient for the good of the Kirk that the ministers, as the third estate of the realm, should have a vote in parliament; that the

¹ Calderwood, p. 415. Busk, dress; bonnilie, prettily; ken, know; eneuch, enough.

² Spottiswood, p. 450.

³ March 7. 1597-8.

⁴ Calderwood, p. 418.

⁵ Ibid., p. 419.

same number, being fifty-one or thereby, should be chosen, as were wont of old, in time of the Papistical Kirk, to be bishops, abbots, and priors; and that their election should belong partly to the king and partly to the Kirk.¹

This resolution was adopted in March 1597-8; but the final establishment of Episcopacy did not take place till more than a twelvemonth after this, in a General Assembly convoked at Montrose on the 28th March 1600. On that occasion, it was decided that the king should choose each bishop, for every place that was to be filled, out of a "leet" or body of six, selected by the Kirk. Various caveats, or conditions, were added, to secure the Kirk against any abuse of their powers by these new dignitaries. They were to propound nothing in parliament, in name of the Kirk, without its special warrant and direction. They were, at every General Assembly, to give an account of the manner in which they had executed their commission; they were to be contented with such part of their benefices as the king had assigned for their living; to eschew dilapidation; to attend faithfully on their individual flocks; to claim no higher power than the rest of their brethren in matters of discipline, visitation, and other points of ecclesiastical government; and, lastly, to be as obedient to authority, and amenable to censure in all presbyteries

and provincial or General Assemblies, as the humblest minister of the Kirk.² As to the names of these new dignitaries, the word *bishop* was apparently so odious and repugnant to the people, that the king did not deem it prudent to insist on its adoption; and the brethren unanimously advised that they should not be called *bishops*, but commissioners. James was too well satisfied with the reality of his success in carrying his great scheme to so prosperous an issue, to cavil at this shadow of opposition; and the subject was handed over to the next General Assembly. The feelings with which this triumph of prelatical principles was regarded by the sincere and stern adherents of Puritanism and parity, will be best understood by this brief extract from the work of one of its ablest advocates, the historian Calderwood: "Thus," says he, "the Trojan horse, the Episcopacy, was brought in, covered with *caveats*, that the danger might not be seen; which, notwithstanding, was seen of many, and opposed unto; considering it to be better to hold thieves at the door, than to have an eye unto them in the house, that they steal not: and, indeed, the event declared that their fear was not without just cause; for those commissioners voters in parliament, afterwards bishops, did violate their *caveats* as easily as Sampson did the cords wherewith he was bound."³

CHAPTER X.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1597-8—1600.

HAVING thus continuously traced the establishment in Scotland of this limited episcopacy, we must look back for a moment on the civil history of

the country. This was not marked by any great or striking events. There was no external war, and no internal rebellion or commotion; and the suc-

¹ Calderwood, pp. 420, 421.

² Calderwood, p. 441.

³ Ibid.

cess which had attended all the late measures of the king produced a tranquillity in the country, which had the best effects on its general prosperity. James had triumphed over the extreme license and democratic movements of the Kirk; had restrained the personal attacks of its pulpit; defined, with something of precision, the limits between the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions; evinced an anxiety to raise the character and usefulness of the clergy, by granting them a fixed provision; and added consideration and dignity to the Presbyterian polity, by giving it a representation in the great council of the country. He had, on the other hand, shewn equal wisdom and determination in his conduct to the Roman Catholic earls. None could say that he had acted a lukewarm part to religion. These nobles remained in the country, and had been restored to their estates and honours solely because they were reconciled to the Church. According to the better principles of our own times, he had acted with extraordinary severity and intolerance; but even the highest and hottest Puritan of these unhappy days could not justly accuse him of indifference. He had, moreover, strengthened his aristocracy by healing its wounds, removing or binding up the feuds which tore it, and restoring to it three of its greatest members, Huntley, Angus, and Errol. He had punished, with exemplary severity, the tumult which had been excited in his capital, and read a lesson of obedience to the magistrates and middle orders, which they were not likely to forget. Lastly, he had, in a personal expedition, reduced his borders to tranquillity; and in his intercourse with England, had shewn that, whilst he was determined to preserve peace, he was equally resolved to maintain his independence, and to check that spirit of restless intrigue and interference in which the English ambassadors at the Scottish court had, for so many years, indulged with blameable impunity. Sir Robert Bowes, who had long filled that difficult and dangerous office, had recently died at Berwick, a victim ap-

parently to its anxieties; and having undergone, during his devoted services, the same trials of penury and neglect which, with scarcely one exception, seem to have been the portion of his royal mistress's ambassadors and diplomatic agents.¹ On the 11th of May he had written to his sovereign, imploring his recall, and lamenting that his decay in health, and weakness in body and estate, unfitted him for farther labour: but his remonstrance was ineffectual; and it was not till nearly six months after, that an order arrived, permitting him to retire, and naming Sir William Bowes as his successor. The release, however, came too late. He was then unable to stand from weakness; and he only reached Berwick to expire.² The duties of his office, in the meantime, devolved upon Mr George Nicolson, his secretary, a man of ability, whose letters contain much that is valuable in the history of the times.

On the arrival of Sir William Bowes at the Scottish court, he found the king's mind entirely occupied by one great subject—his title to the English throne after the death of the queen. On this point the tranquillity from other cares now gave James full leisure for thought; and he evinced an extreme sensitiveness in everything connected with it. Reports of speeches against his right of succession, in the

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Robert Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, May 11, 1597.

In the last letter but one which Sir Robert Bowes addressed to Cecil from Edinburgh, there is this pathetic passage:—"Her majesty's gracious compassion taken of me, and of my weakness, is great comfort unto me in my present distress, wherein I now lie, at the seat of God's mercy, and at the point of life, death, sickness, or recovery; in which as I shall fare you shall be shortly advertised. For albeit I had intended this day to have entered my journey towards Berwick, yet, by the advice of my friends, and in respect of my weakness disabling me to stand without help, I have agreed to defer this journey until tomorrow." MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, October 31, 1597.

² His last letter is written from Berwick to Sir R. Cecil, on November 6, 1597. He died on the 16th of the same month. In the State-paper Office is preserved a fly-leaf, with a printed epitaph on Sir Bowes, by Mr William Fowler, secretary to Queen Anne of Denmark.

English parliament; books written in favour of the claim of the Infanta; intrigues of pretenders at home; the jealousy with which the Catholics regarded his reconciliation with the Kirk; the suspicion with which the Kirk observed his favour to the Catholics: all these thorny matters perpetually haunted and harrassed him. From his observations, the ambassador dreaded that the royal mind was beginning to be alienated from England; and in his first interview James certainly expressed himself with some bitterness against Elizabeth. The ex-postulations addressed to him by his good sister, he said, were unnecessarily sharp. She accused him of diminished friendliness, of foreign predilections, of credulity and forwardness; but he must retort these epithets, for he had found herself too ready to believe what was untrue, and to condemn him unheard. It was true that, when he saw other competitors for the crown of England endeavouring in every way to advance their own titles, and even making personal applications to the queen, he had begun to think it time to look to his just claim, and to interest his friends in his behalf. It was with this view he had required assistance from his people to furnish ambassadors to various foreign powers. This, surely, he was entitled to do: but anything which had been reported of him beyond this was false; and his desire to entertain all kindly offices with his good sister of England continued as strong as it had been during his whole life.¹ Elizabeth, however, was not satisfied: she still suspected that the Scottish court was inimical to England; and these suspicions were increased by the letters of Nicolson her agent. James was said to be much guided by the opinions of Elphinstone, secretary of state, who was little attached to English interests. There was the warmest friendship between the Scottish queen, Anne of Denmark, and the Countess of Huntley, a devoted Catholic. They often

slept in the same bed; and this favoured lady, as Nicolson quaintly expressed it, had the "plurality of her majesty's kisses."² The two young princesses were entrusted to Lady Livingstone, a Catholic; many things, in short, concurred to show, that although appearances were preserved, that the king might not forfeit his English "gratuity," cordiality was at an end. At this moment a strange circumstance occurred, which exasperated the feelings of both monarchs. A miscreant, named Valentine Thomas, accused James of employing him in a plot against the life of Elizabeth; and it was at first whispered, and afterwards more plainly asserted at the Scottish court, that the queen, though she did not choose to speak openly, believed the accusation. Some dark expressions which she used in a letter to the king seemed to countenance the idea; and it was certain that she had employed Sir Edward Coke, Sir Francis Bacon, and other judges, in the investigation. James resented this, and insisted on explanations. It was needless in him, he said, to disclaim "such vile intended murder;" but he demanded the fullest investigation, and the severest punishment of the wretch who had so foully slandered him. He would proclaim it as false to all the world by sound of trumpet, by open challenge, in any number; yea, of a king to a king! When his late ambassador to England attempted to pacify him, he struck him on the breast, and said he was sure there was a chain of Elizabeth's under his doublet. It was in vain that, to appease him, the Queen of England wrote a letter with her own hand, in which she assured him, that she was not "of so viperous a nature" as to harbour a thought against him; and that the deviser of such abominable slander should have his deserts.³ Even this was not enough. The accusation had been public: the depositions of

² MS., State-paper Office, Occurrences, February 2, 1597-8.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 11, 1598. Nicolson to Burghley. Ibid., Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, July 1, 1598.

the villain remained uncancelled: who could say what use might not be made of them against his future rights, and to prejudice him in the hearts of the English people? Here was the sore point; and James did not cease to remonstrate till he had extorted from the queen a solemn and formal refutation of the whole story.

The subject of his title, indeed, had kept the monarch, for the last three years, in a state of perpetual and irritable activity. He encouraged authors to write upon the question; and jurisconsults, heralds, and genealogists, made their harvest of his anxiety. Monsieur Jessè, a French literary adventurer, who in 1596 visited the Scottish court, was made *Historiographe au Roi d'Escosse*, and commanded to “blaw abroad” Secretary Elphinstone’s discourse on his majesty’s title. Walter Quin, an Irish poet and scholar, drew up a work in Latin on the same subject. Monsieur Damon, another Frenchman, corrected it; and the king sent the manuscript to Waldegrave, his printer, who, in an agony, declared to Nicolson, that he must either print it, and irrecoverably offend his gracious sovereign Queen Elizabeth, or refuse at the peril of his life. Nor was this all: James was suddenly seized with the most sensitive feelings on the subject of his royal mother’s memory. His claims came through her; and slander on the Queen of Scots might taint the transmitted title. Spenser, as it was asserted, had glanced at her under the character of Duessain his Fairy Queen; and the Scottish secretary of state insisted that *Edward* Spenser, (the diplomatist did not even know the immortal poet’s name,) should be severely punished. Quin, too, came to the rescue, and wrote an answer to Spenser; whilst “Dickson,” an English pedagogue, who taught the Art of Memory, forsook his *ferula*, and found in Scotland a more profitable employment in answering the famous Treatise of Doleman, or rather Father Persons, from materials furnished by the king himself.¹

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson

These constant cares were only interrupted by the alarming increase of witches and sorcerers, who were said to be swarming in thousands in the kingdom; and for a moment all other cares were forgotten in the intensity with which the monarch threw himself once more into his favourite subject. But a shocking discovery put an end to this dreadful inquisition. An unhappy creature, named Aitken, was seized on suspicion, put to torture, and in her agony confessed herself guilty, named some associates, and offered to purge the country of the whole crew, if she were promised her life. It was granted her; and she declared that she knew witches at once by a secret mark in their eyes, which could not possibly be mistaken. The tale was swallowed. She was carried for months from town to town throughout the country, and in this diabolical circuit accused many innocent women, who, on little more than the evidence of a look, were tried and burnt. At last suspicion was roused. A woman, whom she had convicted of having the devil’s eyemark, was disguised, and, after an interval, again brought before her: she acquitted her. The experiment was repeated with like success; and the miserable creature, falling on her knees, confessed that torture had made her a liar, both against herself and others. This, as it well might, brought the royal inquisitionist of sorcery, and his civil and ecclesiastical assistants, to their senses. The Commission of Inquiry was recalled, and all proceedings against the witches discharged, till the parliament should have determined the form and evidence to be adopted in their trial.²

Everything was now tranquil in the southern part of the kingdom; and the whole estate, to use Nicolson’s expression to Cecil, so “marvellous quiet,”³ that the king had leisure to

to Cecil, February 25, 1597-8. MS., Advocates’ Library, Edinburgh, Balcarres Papers, vol. vii., pp. 26, 29. The king to the secretary.

² Spottiswood, p. 448. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Cecil, August 15, 1597. Same to same, September 5, 1597.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, Nov. 20, 1598.

attend to an important and long-neglected subject—the condition of the Highlands and Isles. It had, for some time, been James's intention to visit these remote districts in person, and, as usual, to overawe them by the terror of the royal name, backed by an army and a fleet; but year after year had passed, and nothing was done. His impoverished finances, his quarrel with the Kirk, his entanglements with the Papist earls, his embassies to foreign courts on the subject of his title,—all these engrossed his attention; and the fragments of leisure which remained were filled up by the witches, and a visit made to Scotland by the Duke of Holstein, the brother of his queen, which seems to have thrown the court into a perpetual whirl of pageantry, intoxication, and masquerade. The people, according to Nicolson, groaned at the expense; and his majesty was much distempered both in his privy purse and his digestion.¹ But these revels and potations had at last an end: the joyous Dane took leave; and the royal mind, relapsing into sobriety, turned to the Isles and Donald Gorm Macdonald. This potent Highland chieftain had recently made advances to Elizabeth; and it is not uninteresting to remark the stateliness with which a prince amongst the northern *vikingr* approached the English Semiramis. He styled himself Lord of the Isles of Scotland, and chief of the clan Donnel Irishmen; and after a proud enumeration of the petty island princes and chiefs who were ready to follow him in all his enterprises, he offered, upon certain "*reasonable motives and considerations*," to embrace the service of the Queen of England, and persuade the Isles to throw off all allegiance to the Scottish crown. He and his associates were ready, they declared, on a brief warning, to stir up rebellion throughout all the bounds of the mainland, to "*fasche*"² his majesty, and weary the whole estates; to create a necessity for new taxation, and thus

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 9, 1598.

² Trouble.

disgust all classes of his subjects. To induce Elizabeth to embrace these proposals, Donald informed the queen, that he knew the secret history of the Scottish king's intercourse with her arch-rebel Tyrone, and could lay before her the whole intrigues of the Catholic earls lately reconciled to the Kirk, but "meaning nothing less in their hearts than that which they showed outwardly to the world." He would disclose, also, he said, the secret history of the Spanish practices in Scotland; and prove with what activity the northern Jesuits and seminary priests had been weaving their meshes, and pushing forward "their diabolical, pestiferous, and antichristian courses;" which he, Donald Gorm Macdonald, protested before God and his angels he detested with his whole soul. All this he was ready to do upon "good deservings and honest courtesies," to be offered him by the Queen of England; to whose presence he promised to repair upon a moment's warning.³

What answer was given by the English queen to these generous and disinterested proposals does not appear; although the letter of Donald Gorm, who made it, is marked in many places by Burghley with the trembling hand of sickness and old age. It is probable, that under the term "*honest courtesies*," more substantial rewards were found to be meant than Elizabeth was willing to bestow; and that the perpetual feuds, massacres, and conspiracies which occurred amongst these Highland chiefs and their followers, disgusted this princess, and shook her confidence in any treaties or alliances proposed by such savage auxiliaries. It was in one of these barbarous plots that Maclean of Duart, a firm friend of Elizabeth, with whose warlike exploits we are already acquainted, met his death;⁴ being treacherously slain in Isla, by his nephew, Sir James Macdonald, who persuaded him to visit the island; alleging, as a pretext, his

³ MS., State-paper Office, endorsed by Burghley. "Donald Gorm Macdonald," March 1598.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Sir R. Cecil, Aug. 10, 1598. *Supra*, pp. 223, 236.

desire to make an amicable settlement of their differences. So little did the brave Lord of Duart suspect any foul play, that he came to the meeting without armour, in a silk dress, and with only a rapier at his side. Along with him were his second son, and the best of his kin, in their holiday garb, and with little other arms than their hunting-knives and boar spears; but although set upon by an ambush of nearly seven hundred men, they made a desperate defence. Maclean, a man of Herculean strength, slew three of the Macdonalds at the first onset. When he saw there was no hope, he commanded his son, who fought beside him, to fly, and live to avenge him;¹ but the chief himself, and a little knot of his clansmen, stood shoulder to shoulder, and were not cut down till after fifty of their assailants had fallen.

The death of this great chief was little resented by the king, for James had long been jealous of his dealings with Elizabeth, and his bitter hostility to Huntley; whilst, at this moment, Sir James Macdonald of Dunluce, his murderer, was in high favour at the Scottish court.² This Macdonald, known in Irish history as James Mac-sorlie, had been long a thorn in the side of England, stirring up rebellion in Ireland, and offering his services to James as an active partisan both in Spanish and Scottish affairs. Mac-sorlie seems to have been a perfect specimen of those Scoto-Hebridean barons who so often concealed the ferocity of the Highland freebooter under the polished exterior which they had acquired by an occasional residence in the low country. It was his pleasure sometimes to join the court at Falkland or Holyrood, mingle in its festivities, give rich presents to the queen and her ladies, outshine the gayest, and fascinate all observers by the splendour of his tastes and the

elegance of his manners;³ but suddenly would come a message from some Highland ally, and Macsorlie flew back to his native islands, where, the moment his foot touched the heather, the gay courtier became a rampant and blood-bolstered savage. Macsorlie had, for years, been the ally of Tyrone, and the soul of the resistance in Ireland; and Elizabeth resented the favour shewn him by James; who replied, “That if his convicted traitors, Bothwell and Colvile, walked the streets of her capital, he was as free to entertain an island chief who owed her no allegiance, and whose assistance was useful to him in reducing the remote Highland districts which had insolently assumed independence.”⁴

So dreadful, indeed, was now the state of those portions of his dominions, that, to prevent an utter dis severing from the Scottish crown, something must be done; and many were the projects suggested. At one time the king resolved to proceed to the disturbed districts in person, and fix his head-quarters in Kentire; at another, a deputy was to be sent, armed with regal powers; and twice the Duke of Lennox was nominated to this arduous office.⁵ The old plan, too, might have been repeated, of granting a royal commission to one or other of the northern *Reguli*, who were ever prepared, under the plea of loyalty, to strengthen their own hands, and exterminate their brethren; but this, as had been often felt before, was to abandon the country to utter devastation; and a more pacific and singular policy was now adopted. An association of Lowland barons, chiefly from Fife, took a lease from the crown of the Isle of Lewis, for which they agreed, after seven years' possession, to give the king an annual-rent of one hundred and forty chalders of victual; and came under an obligation to conquer their farm at their own charges.

¹ The present Earl Compton, eldest son of the Marquis of Northampton, is descended, through his mother, the late amiable and accomplished Lady Compton, from this second son.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, Aug. 10, 1598.

³ *Analecta Scotica*, p. 105, Sir John Skene to the Lord Secretary.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, August 16, 1598.

⁵ Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, pp. 267, 283.

Another company of noblemen and gentlemen in Lothian offered, under a similar agreement, to subdue Skye. And this kind of feudal joint-stock company actually commenced their operations with a force of six hundred soldiers, and a motley multitude of farmers, ploughmen, artificers, and pedlars. But the Celtic population and their haughty chiefs could not consent to be handed over, in this wholesale fashion, to the tender mercies and agricultural lectures of a set of Saxon adventurers. The Lowland barons arrived, only to be attacked with the utmost fury, and to have the leases of their farms, in the old Douglas phrase, written on their own skins with steel pens and bloody ink. For a time, however, they continued the struggle; and having entered into alliance with some of the native chiefs, fought the Celts with their own weapons, and more than their own ferocity. Instead of agricultural or pastoral produce, importations of wool, or samples of grain, from the infant colony, there was sent to the Scottish court a ghastly cargo of twelve human heads in sacks; and it was hoped that, after such an example of severity, matters might succeed better. But the settlers were deceived. After a feeble and protracted struggle of a few years, sickness and famine, perils by land and perils by water, incessant war, and frequent assassinations, destroyed the colony; and the three great northern chiefs, Macdonald of Sleat, Macleod of Harris, and Mackenzie of Kintail, enjoyed the delight of seeing the principal gentlemen adventurers made captive by Tormod Macleod; who, after extorting from them a renunciation of their titles, and an oath never to return to the Lewis, dismissed them to carry to the Scottish court the melancholy reflection, that a Celtic population, and the islands over which it was scattered, were not yet the materials or the field for the operations of the economists of Fife and Mid-Lothian.¹

¹ Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, pp. 290-299. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, July 1, 1598.

The king's recent triumph over the ministers, the vigour with which he had brought the bishops into parliament, and compelled his nobles to renounce their blood-feuds, seem to have persuaded him that his will and prerogative were to bear down all before him; but a slight circumstance now occurred which, had he been accustomed to watch such political indications, might have been full of warning and instruction. The magistrates of Edinburgh had arrested an offender: he was rescued by one of the servants of the king. The magistrates prosecuted the rescuer, and compelled him to give assurance that he would deliver the original culprit; but the courtier failed in his promise, and the civic authorities seized him and sent him to prison. An outcry arose. It was deemed disgraceful that an officer of the royal household, a gentleman responsible solely to the king, should be clapt up in jail by a set of burghers and bailies. James interfered, and commanded his servant to be set free; but the bailies refused. The monarch sent a more angry message; it was met by a still firmer reply: the provost and magistrates declared that they were ready to resign their offices into the king's hands; as long, however, as they kept them, they would do their duty. James was much enraged, but cooled and digested the affront.²

Within a fortnight after, however, arose a more serious dispute between the crown and the Court of Session, the supreme court of judicature, in which its president, Sir Alexander Seton, and the majority of the judges, exhibited a spirit of independence which is well worthy of being recorded. The subject of quarrel was a judgment pronounced by the court in favour of the celebrated minister of the Kirk, Mr Robert Bruce, who had been deprived of his stipend by the king. Bruce sued the crown before the Session, and obtained a decision in his favour. The monarch appealed, came to the court in person, pleaded his own cause

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, Feb. 27, 1598-9.

with the utmost violence, and commanded the judges to give their vote against Mr Robert. The President Seton then rose : " My liege," said he, " it is my part to speak first in this court, of which your highness has made me head. You are our king ; we, your subjects, bound and ready to obey you from the heart, and with all devotion to serve you with our lives and substance ; but this is a matter of law, in which we are sworn to do justice according to our conscience and the statutes of the realm. Your majesty may, indeed, command us to the contrary ; in which case I, and every honest man on this bench, will either vote according to conscience, or resign and not vote at all." Another of the judges, Lord Newbattle, then rose, and observed, " That it had been spoken in the city, to his majesty's great slander, and theirs who were his judges, that they dared not do justice to all classes, but were compelled to vote as the king commanded : a foul imputation, to which the lie that day should be given ; for they would now deliver a unanimous opinion against the crown." For this brave and dignified conduct James was unprepared ; and he proceeded to reason long and earnestly with the recusants ; but persuasions, arguments, taunts, and threats, were unavailing. The judges, with only two dissentient votes, pronounced their decision in favour of Mr Robert Bruce ; and the mortified monarch flung out of court, as a letter of the day informs us, muttering revenge, and raging marvellously.¹ When the subservient temper of these times is considered, and we remember that Seton the president was a Roman Catholic, whilst Bruce, in whose favour he and his brethren decided, was a chief leader of the Presbyterian ministers, it would be unjust to withhold our admiration from a judge and a court which had the courage thus fearlessly to assert the supremacy of the law.

It was during the course of this year that the Queen of England lost

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, 16th March, 1598.

Lord Burghley, who died on the 4th of August 1598, in his seventy-eighth year, a long tried and affectionate servant to his royal mistress ; but of whom, however high his character as an English statesman, no Scottish historian can speak without censure. He had been, for nearly forty years, the almost exclusive adviser of the English queen in her Scottish affairs. It was chiefly his advice and exertions that brought the unhappy Mary to the scaffold ; and in his policy towards Scotland he seems almost invariably to have acted upon the principle, that to foster civil dissension in that kingdom, was to give additional strength and security to England. Happily, the time has come when we may pronounce this maxim as unsound, as it is dishonest ; but in those days, craft was mistaken for political wisdom : and Sir Robert Cecil, Lord Burghley's second son, who now succeeded to his father's power, had been educated in the same narrow school.

This able man, who filled the office of secretary of state to Elizabeth, had, as we have seen, for some years taken the chief management of Scottish affairs ; and, soon after his father's death, he became deeply alarmed for the orthodoxy of James and his queen ; suspecting them, as appears by a paper in his own hand, of growing every day more devoted in their affection to the pope.² That these were ideal terrors, of the English secretary, the result plainly shewed ; but the true key to this apparent papal predilection was James's extreme poverty, the rigid economy of Elizabeth, who refused to supply his wants, and a hope entertained by the Scottish king, that if he exhibited a disposition to relax in the rigidity of his Protestant principles, and to maintain an amicable intercourse with the Catholics, his exhausted exchequer might be recruited by a supply of Roman and Spanish gold. But Cecil, although he allowed some weight to this, thought it too slight a cause to account for the strong symp-

² MS., State-paper Office, Memorial of the present state of Scotland, 1598. Ibid., Nicolson to Cecil, April 14, 1599.

toms of declension from the reformed opinions exhibited both by the king and his councillors, and advised his royal mistress instantly to dispatch Sir William Bowes into Scotland, whose veteran experience in Scottish politics might, he hoped, bring about a reaction. Want of money might, as Cecil contended, explain somewhat of James's late coldness; but there must be deeper agencies and convictions producing the strange appearances now exhibited by a country which had, within these few years, stood in the van of Protestant kingdoms; which had been the stronghold of Presbyterian purity. It was noted, too, by Cecil, that Elphinstone, James's principal secretary of state, was a Catholic; that Seton, the president of the Session, was a Catholic; that Lord Livingstone, the governor of the young princesses, was a Catholic; and that Huntly, who, notwithstanding his recent recantation, was strongly suspected of a secret attachment to his ancient faith, possessed the highest influence over the king.¹ Then, James's late embassies to Catholic princes; the favour shewn to Gordon the Jesuit; his secret encouragement of Tyrone, the great enemy of England; a late mission of Colonel Semple to Spain; his animosity to the ministers of the Kirk; his introduction of bishops; his correspondence with the Duchess of Feria, and other Catholics; and even his speeches in the open convention of his three estates, were all quoted, and not without good reason, as strong proofs of his defection.

The necessities to which the king had reduced himself by his too lavish gifts to his favourites, and the thoughtless extravagance of his household, were indeed deplorable, and produced repeated remonstrances from his treasurer, comptroller, and other financial officers. Money, they said, in a homely and passionate memorial, was required for the "entertainment of the king's bairns, gotten and to be begotten;" for the renewing of his majesty's whole moveables and silver work, all worn

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Memorial of the present state of Scotland.

and consumed; for the repair and fortification of his castles of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Blackness; for the keeping up of his palaces, of which Holyrood and Linlithgow were in shameful decay, and in some parts wholly ruinous. Money was required in all departments of the service of the state, and in all districts, without the kingdom and within it, in the south and in the north. There were no funds to pay the resident in England; no funds to procure secret intelligence; none to support the public officers at home; none to furnish the wardens of the west marches; none to fit out a lieutenant for the expedition against the Western Isles, where the rebels had taken Dunyveg, and were in great strength.² It was in vain for James to look to England. Elizabeth replied by sending him a list of her gratuities, which proved that, from 1592 to 1599, she had given him twenty-six thousand pounds.³ At court, the want of money produced strange scenes; and the high offices of state, instead of being sought after as objects of ambition, were shunned as thankless and ruinous to their possessors. The great office of lord high-treasurer was going a-begging. Blantyre declared he could hold it no longer. Cassillis, a young nobleman who had recently married the rich widow of the Chancellor Maitland, a lady who might have been his mother, was prevailed on to accept it; and had taken the oaths, when the gossip of the court brought to his ears an ominous speech of the king, who had been heard to say, that Lady Cassillis's purse should now be opened for her rose nobles. This alarmed the incipient treasurer into a prompt resignation; but James stormed, ordered his arrest, seized his and his wife's houses, and compelled him to purchase his pardon by a heavy fine.⁴ In the end the dangerous gift was accepted

² MS., State-paper Office, the King's extraordinary Charges.

³ Ibid. Her Majesty's Gratuities to the King of Scots.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, April 10, 1599. Ibid., same to same, April 14, 1599. Ibid., same to same, June 9, 1599. Spottiswood, p. 464.

by the Master of Elphinstone, brother of the secretary of state, “a wise, stout man,” as Nicolson characterises him. Yet all his wisdom and firmness were unequal to the task of recruiting the public purse; and so utterly impoverished did he find it, that the expenses of the baptism of the young Princess Margaret, which took place at this time, were defrayed out of the private pockets of the lords of the bed-chamber.¹

On Sir William Bowes’s arrival in Edinburgh, early in May 1599, he found the ministers of the Kirk in high wrath against the king, and full of the most gloomy views as to the state of the country. James had been recently employing his leisure hours in writing his celebrated Treatise on Government, the *Basilicon Doron*, which he had addressed to his son the Prince of Wales; and having employed Sir James Sempill, one of his gentlemen, to make a transcript, the work was imprudently shewn by him to Andrew Melvil; who took offence at some passages, made copies of them, and laying them, without mentioning any names, before the presbytery of St Andrews, accused the anonymous author of having bitterly defamed the Kirk. What the exact passages were which Melvil had transcribed does not appear; but it is certain that the book contained an attack upon the Presbyterian form of church government, and that the prince was instructed to hold none for his friends but such as had been faithful to the late Queen of Scots. It was very clear, (so the ministers argued,) that no person entertaining such sentiments as were openly expressed in this work, could endure for any long time the wholesome discipline of the Kirk; and that the severe and sweeping censure pronounced upon the Scottish Reformation, as the offspring of popular tumult and rebellion, very plainly indicated the author’s leaning to Prelacy and Popery. What was to be expected, said they, from a writer who described

the leaders of that glorious work, as “fiery and seditious spirits, who delighted to rule as *Tribuni plebis*;” and having found the gust of government sweet, had brought about the wreck of two queens; and during a long minority had invariably placed themselves at the head of every faction which weakened and distracted the country? What was to be hoped for if those men, who had been ever the champions of the truth, were to be held up to scorn and avoidance in terms like the following: “Take heed, therefore, my son, to such Puritans, very pests in the church and commonweal, whom no deserts can oblige, neither oaths nor promises bind; breathing nothing but sedition and calumnies, aspiring without measure, railing without reason; and making their own imaginations (without any warrant of the Word) the square of their conscience. I protest before the great God,—and since I am here as upon my testament, it is no place for me to lie in,—that ye shall never find with any Highland or border thieves greater ingratitude, and more lies, and vile perjuries, than with these fanatic spirits.”

When the royal commissioners, Sir Patrick Murray and Sir James Sandilands, attempted to discover the means by which these obnoxious sentences had been presented to the synod of St Andrews, they were utterly foiled in the attempt; but the offence was at last traced to an obscure minister at Anstruther, named Dykes; who fled, and was denounced rebel. The rumour had now flown through the country that James was the author of the passages, and had given instructions to the prince, which shewed an inveterate enmity to the Kirk; and it was thought that the publication of the whole work would be the likeliest means to silence the clamour. The book accordingly made its appearance; and in Archbishop Spottiswood’s opinion,¹ did more for James’s title, by the admiration it raised in England for the piety and wisdom of the royal author, than all the Discourses on the Succession which were published at this time. In

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, April 20, 1599. Ibid., same to same, April 10, 1599.

¹ Spottiswood, p. 456.

Scotland the effect, if we believe Sir William Bowes, was the very opposite. It was received by the ministers with a paroxysm of indignation; and soon after the arrival of the English ambassador, the whole Kirk agreed to proclaim a general Fast, to avert, by prayer and humiliation, the judgments so likely to fall on an apostate king and a miserable country. For two entire days the Fast was rigidly observed; and Bowes declared, in his letter to Cecil, that in all his life he had never been witness to a more holy or powerful practice of religion.¹ From the pulpit the ministers proclaimed to the people the chief causes for their call to mourning. A general coldness in God's service had seized, they said, on all ranks. The enemies of the Gospel, who in purer days had been driven into banishment, were now everywhere returning; and almost a third of the realm was deprived of every means for the teaching of the people. The king himself had become the defamer of the Kirk; his children were brought up by an excommunicated Papist; and the young nobility, the hopes of the country, went abroad meanly instructed, and returned either Atheists or Catholics.²

A singular event occurred at this time, which led to the recall of Bowes, the English ambassador, and gave high umbrage to the Scottish king. An English gentleman, named Ashfield,³ had lately come from Berwick on a visit to the Scottish court, who, as there is strong reason to believe, was one of those confidential agents whom James had employed in England to give him secret advice and information on the subject of his succession to the English throne, after the death of the queen. Lord Wylloughby, the governor of Berwick, had himself recommended Ashfield to James's notice; but he had scarcely taken his leave, when Wylloughby discovered that he was a suspicious character, and might do much mischief in Scotland. His

alarm became still greater, when he found the attention shewn to Ashfield by James; his intimacy with the Catholic party at court, then in great favour with the king; and the strong suspicion of Bowes the ambassador, that some treachery against England was contemplated. It was determined to destroy it in the bud, by kidnapping the principal party; and John Guevara, deputy-warden of the east marches, Wylloughby's cousin, undertook the commission. Repairing, with only three assistants, to Edinburgh, it was concerted with Bowes, that the ambassador's coach should be waiting on Leith sands, and that Ashfield, under pretence of taking a pleasure drive, should be inveigled into it, and carried off. All succeeded to a wish. Ashfield, as he took his exercise on the sands with some gentlemen, amongst whom were young Fernyhurst, Sir Robert Melvil, and Bowes, was met by Guevara and his companions, and easily persuaded, "under colour of old friendship and good fellowship,"⁴ to join in a wine party; at which, becoming somewhat merry and confused, he readily fell into the trap, entered the coach, and instead of being driven back to Edinburgh, found himself, to his utter confusion, conveyed rapidly to Berwick, and placed under sudden restraint by Lord Wylloughby. Next morning, Wainman, another of the governor's servants, arrived with Ashfield's papers, which he and Bowes had seized, and brought intelligence that the Scottish king was in the greatest rage at the indignity offered him; and that the people had surrounded Sir William Bowes's lodging, and threatened his life. It had been discovered that the gentlemen who kidnapped Ashfield were in Wylloughby's service, that the coach belonged to the English ambassador, and that some intoxicating potion had been put in his wine. James wrote a severe and dignified remonstrance to Wylloughby, in which he demanded to know whether this outrage had been

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Cecil, June 25, 1599.

² Ibid.

³ Afterwards Sir Edmund Ashfield.

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⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil, June 15, 1599. See also, B.C., Wylloughby to Cecil, June 13, 1599.

committed under any warrant or order from the English queen;¹ assuring him that it was a matter which, without speedy reparation, he would not pass over. To this Wylloughby boldly replied, that what had been done was not in consequence of any warrant from the queen, but in the discharge of his own public duty;² whilst Sir William Bowes, who had concerted the whole, when challenged on the subject, made no scruple of asserting, that he had not only no hand in the business, but was utterly ignorant of all about it.³ So true was Sir Henry Wotton's well-known pun on the character of ambassadors of these days. James's dissatisfaction, however, was so great, and the coldness and distance with which he treated Bowes made his place so irksome, that Elizabeth soon afterwards recalled him.⁴

The arrival of a French ambassador at this crisis increased the dissatisfaction of the English queen and the ministers of the Kirk; who suspected that his mission, although kept secret, was connected with James's intrigues with the Catholics abroad. He was a gentleman of the house of Bethune, a younger brother of the great Sully, and much caressed at the Scottish court: but what especially alarmed the Kirk was his having brought a Jesuit along with him, who was frequently closeted with the king; whilst the openness with which Sully was allowed the ex-

ercise of his religion, caused the brethren to sigh over the contrast of the present cold and liberal times with the happy days when it was death to set up the Mass in Scotland. Scarcely had these feelings subsided, and the ministers begun to congratulate themselves on the prospect of the speedy departure of Bethune, when their wrath was rekindled by the arrival of Fletcher and Martin, with their company of comedians; whom James, who delighted in the theatre, had sent for from England. To the strict notions of these divines, profane plays, and the licentious mummeries of the stage, were almost as detestable as the Mass itself. The one was idolatry—the worship of Baal, or the golden calf; the other was profanity—the dancing of Herodias' daughter: and as this had led to Herod's rash oath, and the decapitation of the Baptist, so did these English buffoons recall to their mind the miserable times of the Guisean domination, when the court was full of revelry and masquerade, and the blood of the saints was shed like water. It was no wonder that, with such feelings, the arrival of this gay troop of players was received with a storm of ecclesiastical wrath, for which the gentlemen of the buskin were little prepared; and their case appeared desperate, when the magistrates of the capital, acting under the influence of the Kirk, prohibited the inhabitants, by a public act, from haunting the theatre. But James was not so easily defeated. Fletcher had been an old favourite; nor was this his first visit to Scotland. He had been there before, in 1594; and, on his return to England, had suffered some persecution from his popularity with James; who now called the provost and his councillors before him, compelled them to rescind their act, and proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, not only that the comedians should continue their entertainments, but insisted that, next Sunday, the ministers should inform their flocks that no restraint or censure should be incurred by any of his good subjects who chose to recreate themselves by "the said comedies and

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., James VI. to Lord Wylloughby, June 14, 1599.

² Ibid. Lord Wylloughby to James, original draft, June 15, 1599.

³ Ibid. Wylloughby to Cecil, June 15, 1599. Also, ibid. Bowes to Cecil, June 16, 1599.—Bowes's activity and connivance is completely proved by Lord Wylloughby's letter of the 15th June, to Cecil. He there says:—"I sent some to Edinburgh, with instructions for his reducing. They made divers overtures to my lord ambassador, [this was Bowes.] It pleased him to accept of one, which was to draw him to Leith; there under colour of a dissolute kindness and good fellowship, to make him merry with wine; then to persuade him to ride home in a coach, sent out of purpose therein to surprise him, and bring him away; which, as it pleased God, had very good success." The coach was Bowes's.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Bowes to Cecil, July 9, 1599.

plays." "Considering," so runs the royal act, "that we are not of purpose, nor intention, to authorize or command any thing quhilke¹ is profane, or may carry any offence."²

The king's mind had long run intently on the subject of the succession; and he now adopted a measure which, so far as Elizabeth was concerned, was calculated rather to injure than advance his title. A general band or contract was drawn up, " purporting to be made by the good subjects of the king's majesty, for the preservation of his person and the pursuit of his undoubted right to the crown of England and Ireland."³ The whole matter, during its preparation, was kept secret, and James trusted that no whisper would reach the ears of his good sister Elizabeth. But he was disappointed; for Nicolson, on the 27th November 1599, thus mentioned it to Cecil: "I hear, which I beseech your honour to keep close, that there is a general band, subscribed by many, and to be subscribed by all earls, lords, and barons: binding them, by solemn vow and oath, to serve the king with their lives, friends, heritages, goods, and gear; and to be ready in warlike furniture, for the same on all occasions, but especially for his claim to England."⁴ The English envoy then mentioned, that on the 10th of the succeeding month of December, there was to be held a full convention of the estates, in which some solid course was to be adopted to supply the king with money, and provide for the arming of his subjects, to be ready when he might need them. But when the estates assembled, the result did not justify expectations. The convention, indeed, was fully attended, and sufficiently loyal in its general feeling; yet when the monarch explained his wants, and sought their advice and assistance, they heard him coldly, and delayed their answer till the next

meeting of the estates. In his harangue, James declared his dislike to any offensive scheme of taxation; proposing, in its place, that a certain sum should be levied on every head of cattle and sheep throughout the country; but this was utterly refused. He forbore, therefore, to press the point, and contented himself with an appeal to them for that support which all good subjects should give their prince for the vindication of his lawful claims. He was not certain, he said, how soon he should have occasion to use arms; but whenever it should be, he knew his right, and would venture crown and all for it. Let them take care, therefore, that the country be furnished with armour according to the acts made two years before.⁵ This was cheerfully agreed to; and meanwhile the king, whose financial ingenuity seems to have been whetted by the gloomy prospect of an empty exchequer at the time money was becoming every day more needed, drew up another scheme which was submitted to his estates with as little success as the former. Its object was excellent, being to remove the burden of supplies from the poor commons and labourers of the ground; for which purpose he proposed, that the whole country should be "disposed, as it were, into one thousand persons, and each person to pay a particular sum;" which, all being joined, would make up a total equal to his majesty's necessities.

Against this plan, which had, at least, the merit of simplicity, a formal protest was presented by the barons and burghs. The Laird of Wemyss in the name of the barons, and John Robertson for the burghs, insisted that they should be especially excepted from any commission given to the sheriffs, for the levying such a sum, and should continue to "stint [tax] themselves in auld manner;" but as the proposal was hypothetical, and came before the estates merely as an overture, it was judged enough to meet it by delay; and so anxious was the king to spare his people, and fall

¹ Quhilke; which.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nov. 12, 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.

³ MS., State paper Office, A general Band, voluntarily made by the good subjects of the king's majesty, &c.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nov. 27, 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, December 15, 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.

in with the wishes of all, that he not only agreed to except the barons and burghs, but to drop the whole scheme if any better should be proposed at the next convention, which was fixed to be held at Edinburgh on the 20th of June.¹ It was happy that all ended so amicably; for at the beginning of the convention he had exerted himself to carry his purpose by means which were violent and unconstitutional. "To effect this," said Nicolson, in writing to Cecil, "the king drew in the whole borders, the officers of estate, Sir Robert Kerr, Sir Robert Melvil, and others, contrary to the order there appointed, of six only of

every estate to have voted for the rest."²

It was during this convention, held at Edinburgh in December, that the king, with advice of his secret council, passed an important act, appointing, in all time coming, the "first day of the year to begin upon the 1st of January;" and this statute, it was added, should take effect upon the 1st day of January next to come, which shall be the 1st day of January 1600.³ Previous to this time the Scottish year had begun on the 25th of March; and it is worthy of observation, that this still continued the mode of reckoning in England.⁴

CHAPTER XI.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1600.

IN the course of these labours we are now arrived at an extraordinary plot, of which the history, after all the light shed upon it by recent research, is still, in some points, obscure and contradictory. This is the Gowrie conspiracy. Its author, or, as some have not scrupled to assert, its victim, was the grandson of that Patrick lord Ruthven, who, as we have seen, acted a chief part in the atrocious murder of Riccio, and died in exile soon after that event.² It was the second son of this nobleman, William, fourth Lord Ruthven, who, after sharing the guilt and banishment of his father for his accession to the same plot, was restored by the Regent Morton, and returned to Scotland to engage in new conspiracies. It was his threats, and the menaces of the fierce Lindsay, that were said to have extorted from

the miserable captive of Lochleven the demission of her crown. His services were rewarded by an earldom; and from the fertile brain and unscrupulous principles of the new earl proceeded the plot for the seizure of the king, known by the name of the Raid of Ruthven. He was pardoned; became again suspected; threw himself into another enterprise against the government, with Mar and Angus; was detected, found guilty, and suffered on the scaffold. Of his treason there was no doubt; but his conviction, as we have seen,⁵ was procured by a disgraceful expedient, which roused the utmost indignation of his friends. This happened in 1584; and, for two years after, the imperious government of Arran directed, or rather compelled, the royal wrath

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Act for the year of God to begin the 1st of January, yearly.

² Sir H. Nicolas's excellent work on the Chronology of History, p. 41.

³ Supra, vol. iv. p. 75.

⁴ MS., State-paper Office, Copy of the Act of the Convention at St Johnston.

⁵ Supra, vol. iii. p. 220.

into the severest measures against the house of Ruthven. But the destruction of Arran's power permitted the king's temper, generally gentle and forgiving, to have influence; and, in 1586, the earldom was restored to James, the eldest son of the house, who, dying soon after, transmitted it to John, the third earl, the author of the Gowrie conspiracy.

Young Gowrie, at the time of his father's execution, could have been scarcely eight years old;¹ and in the wreck of his house, he, his unhappy mother, and her other children, received an asylum in the north. Here, amidst the savage solitudes of Athole, the country of her son-in-law,² the widowed countess brought up her children, brooded over her wrongs, and taught her sons the story of their father's murder, as his execution was accounted by his party. From such lessons they seem early to have drunk in that deep passion for revenge, which, in those dark days, was so universally felt, that it may be regarded almost as the pulse of feudal life; a passion which, sometimes at a quicker, sometimes at a slower pace, but yet with strong and abiding force, carried on its victims to the consummation of their purpose. Meanwhile the royal pity had awoke: the family was restored to its honours; and the young earl, having been committed to the care of Rollock, the learned principal of the university of Edinburgh, received an excellent education. But the return for all this, on the part both of his mother and himself, was ingratitude and new intrigues. When, in 1593, Bothwell at Holyrood audaciously broke in upon his sovereign, and for a short season obtained possession of his person, it was the Countesses of Gowrie and Athole, the mother and sister of Gowrie, who were his most active assistants; and in 1594, when the same desperate baron, in conjunction with Athole, Ochil-

tree, and the Kirk, organised a second plot, the name of the young Earl of Gowrie appeared in the "*band*" which united the conspirators.³ He was thus early bred up in intrigue; but the king either did not, or would not, discover his guilt: and Gowrie, having received the royal license to complete his education abroad,⁴ passed through England into Italy, studied for five years at the university of Padua, and there is said to have so highly distinguished himself, that he became rector of that famous seminary.⁵ The young earl was now only one-and-twenty;⁶ of an athletic person and noble presence; excellent in all his exercises; an accomplished swordsman; and so ripe a scholar, that there was scarcely any art or faculty which he had not mastered. Amongst his studies, necromancy, or natural magic, was a favourite pursuit; and his tutor, Rhynd, detected him, when at Padua, wearing cabalistic characters concealed upon his person, which were then sometimes used as spells against diabolic, or recipients of angelic influence.⁷ He was an enthusiastic chemist; and, in common with many eminent men of that age, a dabbler in judicial astrology, and a believer in the great arcanum. It is curious that this propensity to magic and visionary pursuits was hereditary in the Ruthven family. His grandfather, the murderer of Riccio, had given Queen Mary a magic ring, as a preservative against poison. His father, the leader in the Raid of Ruthven, when in Italy, had his fortunes foretold by a wizard; and the son, when some of his friends had killed an adder in the braes of Strathbran, lamented their haste, and told them he would have diverted them by making

³ *Supra*, p. 196, and MS., State-paper Office, Scott. Corr. April 1594, Band for Protection of Religion.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, August 22, 1594.

⁵ Calderwood, MS. History, British Museum, Ayscough, 4739, p. 1386, states this positively: but I have not found his authority.

⁶ MS., State-paper Office, drawn up for Cecil in 1592. State of the Scottish nobility.

⁷ Rhynd's Declaration in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 219, 220.

¹ MS., State-paper Office, List of the Scottish Nobility, 1592. In 1592 Gowrie was fifteen years old.

² The Earl of Athole had married the sister of Gowrie, MS., State-paper Office.

it dance to the tune of some cabalistic words which he had learnt in Italy from a great necromancer and divine.

During his residence at Padua, Gowrie addressed to the king a letter full of gratitude and affection.¹ He kept up, also, a correspondence with his old tutor Rollock; and, in 1595, sent a long epistle to Malcolm, the minister of the kirk at Perth, expressing the most devoted attachment to Presbyterian principles, and written in that strange, pedantic, puritanic style which then characterised the correspondence of the most zealous of that party.² The young earl described in this letter, with high exultation and approval, an insane attack made by a fanatical English Protestant upon a Catholic procession, in which he seized the sacred Host, and trampled it under foot; and concluded by expressions of deep regret that his absence from Scotland did not permit him to set forth God's glory in his native country; trusting, as he added, to make up for all this on his return.

This return took place in 1599, through Switzerland; and on arriving at Geneva, he became an inmate for three months in the house of the famous reformer Beza, who cherished him as the son of a father whom his party regarded as a martyr to the Protestant faith. From Geneva he travelled to Paris, where he was received with high distinction at the French court, and by Elizabeth's ambassador, Sir Henry Nevil; who admitted him into his confidence, held private conferences with him "on the alterations feared in Scotland," to use Nevil's own words, "found him to be exceedingly well affected to the cause of religion, devoted to Elizabeth's service, and, in short, a nobleman of whom, for his good judgment, zeal, and ability, exceeding good use might be made on his return."³ Bothwell, his old friend and associate, was also at this time in Paris. On leaving

¹ Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 330.

² It has been printed by Mr Pitcairn in the second volume of his valuable work, the Criminal Trials, pp. 330, 331.

³ Sir Henry Nevil to Secretary Cecil, February 27, 1599. Winwood's Memorials, vol. i. p. 156.

France, Gowrie, carrying warm letters of recommendation from Nevil, proceeded to the English court, where Elizabeth received him with flattering distinction, and kept him for two months, admitting him to her confidence, holding with him great conference⁴ on the state of Scotland, which was then threatening and alarming; and it is said by one author, appointing a guard to watch over his safety. It was then no unfrequent occurrence for the incipient intriguer, or conspirator, to be seized or kidnapped by the stratagem of his opponents; and, if true, this circumstance certainly shews how highly the English queen regarded his safety, and what value she set upon his future services. During this stay in England he became familiar with Sir Robert Cecil, at this moment the most confidential minister of Elizabeth; with the great Lord Wylloughby, one of the honestest and ablest servants of the queen;⁵ and with many others of the leading men about court.

At the time of Gowrie's arrival in England, (3d April 1600,) Elizabeth was deeply incensed with the proceedings of the Scottish king, and his reported intrigues with the Catholics of her own kingdom, and with the courts of Spain and Rome, on the subject of his title. He had resolved, and made no secret of his resolution, to vindicate his right to the crown of England by arms, if it were necessary; and he had roused the resentment and alarm of the party of the Kirk to the highest pitch, by the court which he paid to the Catholics, both at home and on the continent. A letter written to Cecil by Colvile, about six months before this, described these intrigues and preparations in strong terms.

Colvile, it must be remembered, was the confidant of the notorious Bothwell, and an old friend and fellow-conspirator of Gowrie's father. It was certain, so said Colvile in this letter, that two envoys had come to the

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir John Carey to Cecil, May 29, 1600.

⁵ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, James Hudson to Cecil, April 3, 1600. Also, ibid., B.C. Wylloughby to Cecil, August 11, 1600.

Scottish King from the Pope. They had brought high offers : a promise of a hundred thousand crowns at present, and an engagement to pay down two millions the moment he published liberty of conscience, and declared war with England. Twenty thousand Catholics were said to be ready to join the king the moment he crossed the Border. There was not one Catholic prince in Europe who would not support his claim ; and his holiness not only regarded him as the most learned and religious prince of his time, but would willingly follow his advice in restoring to the universal church its purity and discipline.¹ In another letter, written some time before this, and dated 17th August 1599, Colvile speaks to Cecil of the ominous tranquillity of the Scottish court; which, he says, he had often remarked to be never so quiet as when some "snake-stone was hatching;" adding, "*Quand le Merchant dort, le Diable le berche.*" He assured Cecil, that the king was highly enraged and excited against the party of the Kirk. The ministers were led by Bruce and Andrew Melvil; their ranks included Cassillis, Lindsay, Morton, and Blantyre ; and he added, with a significance which this statesman could be at no loss to understand, that if they received any secret encouragement from England, they were devising to send for Gowrie and Argyle, both of whom were then abroad.²

This letter was written towards the end of August 1599, when Gowrie was probably on his route to England; and in the interval between this and his arrival at the court of Elizabeth, the estrangement between the Queen of England and the King of Scots had become more embittered. Nicolson, the English envoy at the Scottish court, was full of alarm at James's almost open hostility. In one of his letters to Cecil, written in the end of April 1600, when Gowrie was at the English court, and, as we have just

seen, admitted to the confidence of this minister and his royal mistress, he described the king as indulging in expressions of the utmost discontent and anger on the subject of the intended peace between England and Spain. Elizabeth (such were James's words) had long resisted every amicable application made to her on the point of his title ; and now he heard one day she was about to marry the Lady Arabella to the brother of the Emperor Mathias; the next, that she had sent for young Beauchamp to court ; the next, that in consequence of her peace with Spain, a priest had openly addressed the Infanta, as the destined restorer of the Catholics in England.³ Of all this, James added, the queen refused him any explanation. She treated him with coldness and suspicion ; and it became him to look to his just rights, and provide for the future.

Such things were said even openly by the King of Scots; but in the secrecy of his cabinet, James used far stronger language. He there insisted, that before Elizabeth's death, which, considering her advanced age and broken health, could not be far distant, he must be ready armed, his exchequer well supplied, and the friends on whom he could place reliance assembled on the spot with their full strength. To compass all this, he had spared no exertion. England swarmed with his spies ; and the "daily creeping in of Englishmen" to the Scottish Court was a matter which perpetually roused the suspicions of Cecil, and cut his royal mistress to the quick. At this very moment, when Gowrie was in such confidential intercourse with that princess and her ministers, the Scottish king had received information which made him stand especially on his guard. It was reported that a plot was then being organized by the faction in the interest of England, to compel the king into a more pacific policy, and arrest his warlike preparations against that realm ;⁴ that Colvile, Archibald

¹ MS., State-paper Office. Advertisements from Scotland, August 18, 1599, enclosed in a letter from Colvile, dated August 21, 1599.

² Ibid.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, Dec. 24, 1599.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, April 20, 1600.

Douglas, and Douglas the Laird of Spot, all of them old employés of Cecil, were the chief conspirators in England; and that they were casting about to draw home the Earl of Gowrie, then at the court of Elizabeth, and on whom they reckoned as a great accession to their strength.¹ Bothwell, too, the arch-traitor, whom of all men the king hated and dreaded most, had been at Paris at the same time with Gowrie: their former intimacy rendered it almost impossible they should not have met; and it was now strongly reported that this desperate man had stolen into Scotland, and had been thrice seen recently in Liddesdale.²

Such was the state of parties; such the mutual heart-burning, jealousy, intrigues, and preparations between the two sovereigns, when Gowrie, after two months' residence in England, left the court of Elizabeth and returned to his native country. The facts hitherto given are all capable of proof: their effects upon the character of Gowrie, and how far they influenced or serve to explain his subsequent extraordinary proceedings, can only be conjectural. Yet it appears that they go far to explain something of the mystery which hitherto has surrounded the origin of this plot; and that here we have one of those cases where, from the elements on which we form our opinion, conjecture may come indefinitely near to certainty. Gowrie was young: and on youth what must have been worked by the flattery of a queen, and so great a queen as Elizabeth? He was ambitious and proud; and when he found that his friends were anxious to place him at the head of the English faction, and in opposition to the hostile projects of the king, was it likely he should decline that pre-eminence? He was a devoted and enthusiastic Puritan, and hated Prelacy. Was such a mind likely to refuse the opportunity that now offered, to re-establish the Presbyterian ascendancy, to reinstate his old friends, the ministers, on the ground

from which they had been driven; and to destroy, if possible, that Catholic faith, which, in his judgment, was idolatrous and damnable? He was animated by a keen desire to revenge his father's death on the monarch who had brought him to the scaffold; and was it probable that when, in the secret conferences which took place with Nevil, Cecil, and Elizabeth, the hostile plans and dangerous intrigues of the King of Scotland were discussed, the Raid of Ruthven should have been forgotten; or that the nefarious project, so repeatedly hazarded, so often crowned with success, to seize the king's person, and administer the government under his pretended sanction, would not present itself? To grasp the supreme power, and have his revenge into the bargain: were such offers unlikely to be held out by so unscrupulous a minister as Cecil? Was it probable that, if held out, they would be refused by Gowrie? But leaving such speculations, let us proceed.

The young earl arrived in Scotland, after his long absence, about the 20th of May; and some little circumstances accompanied his return, which, after his miserable fate, were remembered and much dwelt on. He entered the capital surrounded by an unusually brilliant cavalcade of noblemen and gentlemen, the friends and dependents of his house, and amid the shouts of immense crowds who welcomed his return. On hearing of it, the king shook his head, and observed, that as many shouted when his father lost his head at Stirling. Whether this was said in the presence of the young earl is not not added by Calderwood, who gives the anecdote; but it was noticed, and we may be pretty sure would reach his ear. When he kissed hands, and took his place in the court circle, his fine presence, handsome countenance, and graceful manners, struck every one. He soon became a special favourite of the queen and her ladies, one of whom was his sister, Lady Beatrix Ruthven; and to the king, his learning and scholarship made him equally acceptable. He had lived in the society of the most eminent foreign scholars, philosophers,

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, April 20, 1600.

² Ibid., B.C. Guevara to Lord Willoughby, April 23, 1600.

and divines; but he was equally accomplished in all knightly sports, and could discuss the merits of a hawk or hound as enthusiastically as any subject in the circle of the sciences. This was much to James's content; and as the monarch sat at breakfast, he would often keep Gowrie leaning on the back of his chair, and talk to him with that voluble, undignified familiarity which marked the royal conversation. He rallied the young nobleman, also, on his long stay at the English court; and, as Sir John Carey wrote to Cecil, assailed him with many "fleytes¹ and pretty taunts," on the high honours paid him by Elizabeth, his frequent great conferences with the queen, her offer to bribe him with gold, and the sumptuousness of his reception and entertainment. He marvelled, too, with good-humoured irony, that his old friends, the ministers of the Kirk, had not ridden out to meet him and form part of his triumphant cavalcade;² and, half between joke and earnest, contrived to show him that he had watched all his movements, and was perfectly aware of his confidential intercourse with Nevil, Cecil, and Elizabeth herself.

All this Gowrie took, or seemed to take, in good part.³ He had certainly, he said, been honourably entertained, and very graciously received by the queen of England; but this, he believed, was for the king his master's sake, and so he had accepted it. As for gold, he had been offered none; nor did he need it; he had enough of his own.⁴ It was in one of those familiar conversations on a strange subject, that an allusion escaped the king, which was afterwards remembered. Queen Anne was at this time great with child, and probably did not take sufficient care of herself; but be this as it may, James consulted Gowrie, who had studied at Padua, then the highest medical school in

Europe, on the most common causes of miscarriage. He mentioned several, but insisted on fright or sudden terror as the most dangerous; upon which the king, bursting into a fit of loud and scornful laughter, exclaimed, "Had that been true, my lord, I should never have been sitting here to ask the question. Remember the slaughter of Seignor Davie, wherein thy grandsire was the chief actor:" a reckless, cruel thrust, which the young nobleman must have felt like an adder's sting: for not only his grandfather but his father were present at that bloody deed.⁵

On another occasion, soon after his arrival, a ruffle was nearly taking place in the long gallery at Holyrood, between the servants of Colonel William Stewart and some of the gentlemen of Gowrie's suite. It was this Stewart who had seized his father at Dundee, and dragged him to his trial and death; and all dreaded a bloody encounter. But Gowrie, to their surprise, beat down the weapons of his followers; and giving place with a contemptuous gesture to Stewart, permitted him to walk first into the presence-chamber. On being remonstrated with, his brief and proud reply was a Latin proverb, "*Aquila non captat muscas.*" It is the remark of an old chronicler, that he here covertly alluded to his intended revenge against the king.⁶ It is certain, at least, that it betrayed a determination on Gowrie's part to fly at the highest quarry.

On his first arrival at court, about the middle of May 1600, he found the king's mind still concentrated upon that one subject which had so long filled his thoughts, and which he had determined to bring shortly before a convention of his nobility, barons, and burghs. This was the necessity of making preparation for an event now currently talked of—the death of Elizabeth. To this end James had

¹ Fleytes; scolds.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Sir John Carey to Sir R. Cecil, May 29, 1600.

³ Ibid., Nicolson to Cecil, May 2, 1600.

⁴ Ibid., B.C., Sir John Carey to Sir R. Cecil, May 29, 1600.

⁵ Calderwood, MS. History, British Museum, Sloan, 4739, fol. 1389.

⁶ Anonymous MS. History of Scotland, quoted in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 297.

summoned a convention of the three estates to meet on the 20th of June. He had resolved to levy a tax upon the country, to pay his ambassadors to foreign parts; and to have such a force in readiness as should overawe his enemies, and give confidence to his supporters. On these proposed measures parties were so divided, and such violent storms were apprehended, that the wisest, as Nicolson wrote to Cecil, wished themselves out of the country; and Gowrie, by the advice of his friends, after a brief stay at court, retired to his own estates, "to be a beholder of the issue of these many suspicions."¹ Soon after this, a violent interview took place between the king and the English resident, Nicolson, in which James complained that Elizabeth had treated him with the utmost haughtiness and want of confidence on the subject of the Spanish peace. She blamed him, he said, for matters of which he was wholly innocent, and shewed more kindness to a foreign duke and the Infanta than to him. It was openly bragged by one of her subjects, that Bothwell was to be let loose, to come in again and brave it. She had seized a parcel of muskets, which he had declared upon his honour had been purchased for the use of his household, as if she dreaded they should be turned against herself.² All this, which was daily reported to Elizabeth and Cecil, increased the unfriendly feelings between the two courts, and convinced the English minister that something decided must be done, to check that bold, and almost hostile attitude, in which James seemed now determined to insist upon his rights to the English throne.

At last the important day of the convention of the three estates arrived. The nobility, including Gowrie amongst the rest, assembled; the barons and burghs attended; and the king, after having in many private interviews endeavoured to gain over the leading men to his own views,

brought his proposals before the public meeting of the three estates, in a studied harangue. To his extreme indignation and astonishment, he failed to convince them of the necessity of taxing themselves to raise the sum he required. The majority of the nobility and the prelates, who had been privately canvassed by James, and talked over by the Earl of Mar, were compliant enough; but the barons and the burghs stoutly resisted. The king adjourned the convention from Monday till Tuesday, employing the interval in threats, entreaties, and remonstrances; but on this day they were as stubborn as before. Another and longer adjournment, and another meeting took place. It not only found them in the same indomitable humour, but some of the higher barons began to waver. The Lord President Seton, in reply to the assertion of the royal claimant, that he must have an army ready on the queen's death, to maintain his title, argued against the utter folly of attempting to seize that ancient crown by conquest. For such a purpose, he observed, who could say what exact sum might be required? and if the sum were named, who was so insane as to expect that Scotland could raise it? If about to build a palace, they might have a plan and an estimate; if to raise an army of so many thousand men, some certainty might be had of the funds required; but who would venture to fix the sum necessary for the conquest of England? and if fixed, who could be so mad as to believe that the poor country of Scotland could raise it, when it was notorious that sundry towns in England and the Low Countries could advance more money than all Scotland together?³ Mr Edward Bruce argued for the king's views; and insisted that every true Scotsman, if he regarded the honour of his prince and country, ought to contribute to the sum now required. Let them not imagine, said he, that a refusal would be unaccompanied with danger. Who-

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, May 27, 1600.

² Ibid., May 29, 1600.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 22, 1600. Ibid., same to same, June 29, 1600.

ever usurped England after Elizabeth's death would have an eye to Scotland ; and if they now suffered their king to be defeated of his right, they might chance to find themselves defeated of their country.

This argument somewhat softened James, who had started up in a violent passion and accused the President Seton of perverting his meaning. But nothing could move the barons and burghs. They reiterated their plea of poverty ; declared, that when the time came, they would furnish their monarch as fair an army as ever good subjects levied for their prince ; and in the meanwhile, instead of forty thousand crowns, would give him forty thousand pounds Scots, on the condition that they should never again be taxed in his time ; and that what they did give should go to his own wants, and not to his hungry courtiers. The king spurned at this diminished and conditional offer, and insisted that it should be put to the vote whether it had not been agreed in a former convention at St Johnston, that a hundred thousand crowns should be advanced him by a thousand persons.

On this new question the young Earl of Gowrie now spoke for the first time ; and heading the opposition of the barons and the burghs, exposed the king to the disgrace of a second defeat.¹ He had, he said, been long absent from the country, and had no personal knowledge of what had taken place at St Johnston ; but he contended that the present offer of the burghs and barons, to give forty thousand pounds to the king, and their promise to raise money for an army when it was required, was quite as good, nay, almost a better proposal, than that so strongly insisted on by James. Why, then, should his majesty take such deep umbrage at it ? Surely, he continued, it must be evident, that this demand of the king will bring dishonour upon all parties : it is dishonourable for a prince to ask more than his subjects have to give, and suffer the ignominy

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 29, 1600.

of a refusal ; it is dishonourable for a people that their poverty should be laid bare to the world, and that all men should see and know they could give so little to their prince.²

This speech of Gowrie, and the daring way in which so young a man threw himself into the ranks of the faction opposed to the king, astonished the assembly. "Alas!" said Sir David Murray, a courtier, who stood near ; "yonder is an unhappy man : his enemies are but seeking an occasion for his death ; and now he has given it."³ But if others wondered, the king, to use an expression of Nicolson's to Cecil, absolutely *raged*, and dismissed the assembly with a tumultuous burst of fierce and undignified invective ; mingling his abuse of the barons and burghs with praises of his nobility, whom he assured of his friendship and favour in all their affairs. "As for you, my masters," he exclaimed, turning with flashing eyes to the burghers, "your matters, too, may chance to come in my way ; and, be assured, I shall remember this day, and be even with you. It was I who gave you a vote in parliament ; I who made you a fourth estate ; and it will be well for such as you to remember, that I can summon a parliament at my pleasure, and pull you down as easily as I have built you up." This insulting speech roused one of the oldest of the barons, the Laird of Easter Wemyss, who boldly told the king that he misconstrued their meaning, and forgot how much he owed them, and what great sums they had given him in his necessities. "We have done your majesty," said he, "as good offices for our estate ; and we, your majesty's burghs and barons, are as worthy your thanks as the proudest earl, or lord, or prelate here. Our callings may be inferior, but our devotedness is as great ; and so your majesty will find it when the proper time arrives. As for our places in parliament and convention,

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 29, 1600.

³ MS., Calderwood, Ayscough, 4739, fol. 1389.

we have bought our seats, we have paid your majesty for them, and we cannot with justice be deprived of them. But the throne is surrounded by flatterers, who propagate falsehoods against us : let us be confronted with our accusers, and we engage to prove them liars."¹

With this haughty defence on the part of the lesser barons and burghs, and with the deepest feelings of displeasure against them and Gowrie on the part of the king, the convention separated; and James had to digest, not only the disgrace of a refusal, but the universal satisfaction which, if we may believe Nicolson, it occasioned in the country. He was not diverted from his purpose, however ; for, not ten days after, Sir Robert Cecil, who was familiar with all that had taken place at the convention, was informed by one of his correspondents, that James's preparations against England continued, and that he intended not to tarry till Elizabeth's death. This news was written partly in cipher, on a slip of paper sent to Cecil, endorsed with the caution, "*To read and burn.*" It contained this passage :—"Nicolson tells me he understands, by one who never abused him, that the king is, by all means, seeking a party, and hath a party in England; and by party or faction, if he can have commodity by either, intends not to tarry upon her majesty's death, but take time so soon as without peril he can."²

It is probably from this moment that we may date the actual rise of the Gowrie conspiracy. Elizabeth and James were, as we have just seen, on the very worst terms with each other. Gowrie, by every feeling of education, interest, and revenge, was attached to England and its queen ; and his conduct in the convention had now thrown him into mortal opposition with the King of Scots. James was intriguing with the queen's sub-

jects in England. It was suspected he had fomented the rebellion in Ireland ; and all this at a moment when the queen was most likely to resent it deeply ; for she had lately been roused and irritated by the insane projects of Essex. Although aged, Elizabeth was still unbroken in health ; yet James must be watching for her death, and openly admonishing his subjects to make preparations for taking possession of her crown. This Gowrie knew ; and he reckoned on the support of England in anything he undertook against the king. He could build, too, with certainty on the favourable opinion of the lesser barons, and the influential body of the burghs. They had already made their stand against the king ; in the convention Gowrie had joined them ; and they understood each other. On the Kirk he could rely with still more certainty : he was the darling hope of the Presbyterian party, the son of their martyr : the youthful Daniel, who had kept his first faith entire in the bosom of idolatry, and in the very headquarters of Antichrist. Could he doubt that, in any attempt to stay the headlong haste with which their unhappy king seemed to be throwing himself into the arms of the Catholic party, he would fail to have the whole force of the Kirk upon his side ? All this was encouraging ; and when, in addition to these inducements, he contemplated the rich reward awaiting his success if he made himself master of the king's person—the gratification of his ambition, power, place, fame ; above all, revenge—was it likely that a man of Gowrie's temperament would resist them all ? Besides, he had enemies : his death and ruin, if we may believe one who must have had good cause of knowledge, were already resolved on ;³ and if he did not become the assailant, it was a narrow chance but he might prove the victim. If, on the other hand, he could but strike the blow, his popularity and high connexions promised him many friends, on whose concurrence he could safely reckon.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, June 29, 1600.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, July 9, 1600. Secret information sent in the letter, endorsed, *To read and burn.*

³ *Supra*, p. 233.

But how was the blow to be struck? Here was the whole difficulty and danger; and here, young as he was, Gowrie appears to have devised a plot unlike any hitherto known in his country's history, although fertile in conspiracies: more Italian than Scottish; crafty, rather than openly courageous; and, from its very originality, not, perhaps, unlikely to have succeeded, had the parts assigned to the conspirators been differently cast. His design appears to have been to decoy the king, by some plausible tale, into his castle of Gowrie, on the Tay; to separate him from his suite, and compel him by threats of instant death, to suffer himself to be carried aboard a boat which should be waiting on the river for the purpose. This was the first act in the projected plot. In the second, the vessel was to push instantly out to sea; and the royal prisoner was to be conveyed, in a few hours, to an impregnable little fortalice which overhung the German Ocean, and where, if well victualled, a garrison of twenty men could, for months, have defied a royal army. To communicate with England, and administer the government in the royal name, but under the dictation of Gowrie and his faction, would then be easy. It had been repeatedly done before in the history of the country, and very recently in the Raid of Ruthven; why then should it not be done again?

In all this projected scheme there was some rashness; something smack-ing of youth, audacity, and revenge; but there was also some sagacity. Since the days of the conspiracy against Riccio, down to the Raid of Ruthven, most of the plots which chequer and stain the history of the country had failed, from admitting too many into their secret. A band or covenant had been drawn up; a correspondence opened with England; the envoy at the Scottish court had been admitted to the secret; the Kirk consulted; the pulse of the burghs and barons felt; and so many points presented for suspicion to work on, and treachery to be rewarded, that success was unlikely, and discovery

almost inevitable. That Gowrie had observed this, and had deeply studied the subject of "Conspiracies against Princes" under Machiavel, the most acute of masters, we know from a curious anecdote preserved by Spottiswood. A short time before his unhappy death, a friend found him in the library, with a volume of the great Florentine in his hand. On inquiring the subject of his studies, showing him the book, he observed, that it was a collection of the most famous conspiracies against princes. "A perilous subject," was the reply. "Yes," said the young conspirator; "perilous; because most of such plots have been foolishly contrived, and have embraced too many in the secret. He who goes about such a business, should beware of putting any man on his counsel."¹

Under this idea, Gowrie admitted to his secret as few associates as possible; and his accomplices were men on whom he had the most implicit reliance. They appear to have been only four in number: his brother, Alexander Ruthven, commonly called the Master of Ruthven, who held an office in the king's chamber; Robert Logan of Restalrig, a border baron, distantly connected with the Gowrie family; a third person of rank and consequence, but whose name is still a mystery; and lastly, an old ruffian follower of Logan's, called Laird Bower. Logan was a man already known to Sir Robert Cecil; who, on making some inquiries regarding him in 1599, received from the celebrated Lord Wyllooughby, then governor of Berwick, this brief character of the Scottish border baron:—"There is such a Laird of Lesterlig, as you write of: a main loose man; a great favourer of thieves reputed; yet a man of a good clan, as they here term it; and a good fellow."² The character here given of Logan was far too favourable; for there is no doubt that he was a desperate, reck-

¹ Spottiswood, History, p. 460. Hailes' Notes on the Gowrie Conspiracy.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Lord Wyllooughby to Cecil, January 1, 1598-9. The name is sometimes written Lestelrig, sometimes Restalrig.

less, and unprincipled villain, although a person of a good house, and true to his friends, according to the principles of that border code under which he had been bred. He had run through a large estate in every kind of dissipation and excess, was a mocker at religion, had been a constant follower of the notorious Bothwell, and was now drowned in debt; yet, bad as he was, Laird Bower, his brother conspirator, his chamberlain, or household man, as he termed him, appears to have been a shade blacker. It was to this old borderer that the perilous task was committed, of carrying the letters which passed between Logan and Gowrie. Bower had received his nurture and education in the service of David Hume of Manderston, commonly called "Davie the Devil;" and in this Satanic school had become a more debauched and daring ruffian than his master; who described him, in writing to Gowrie, as a worthy fellow, who would not spare to ride to Hell's yett¹ to pleasure him.² Of the character of the other unknown conspirator nothing can be said, as his name remains yet a shadow. But if we may trust to popular report, Alexander, the Master of Ruthven, was a young man of the highest promise; amiable, accomplished, gentle almost to a fault, and a universal favourite at court; yet, strange as it may appear, the execution of that part of the plot requiring the utmost sternness, promptitude, and decision, was committed to this youth. He it was on whom his brother laid the task of decoying the king into Gowrie House, and forcing him into the boat; whilst Gowrie himself undertook to amuse or intimidate the suite; and Logan was to have his house of Fastcastle ready to receive the royal prisoner.

Both these mansions, Gowrie House and Fastcastle, were, from their construction and situation, singularly well calculated for the attempt against the king. The first was a large baronial mansion, of quadrangular shape, built

¹ Hell's yett, i.e. Hell's gate.

² Logan to Gowrie, in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 285.

in the town of Perth, and on the border of the Tay, the river washing the garden; and fortified by a wall which ran along the bank, and was flanked by two strong towers. Its apartments were numerous; arranged, as was usual in those times, *en suite*, and so as to communicate with each other; and amongst them was a long gallery, which extended along one side of the square, and communicated, by a door at the end, with a chamber which, in its turn, led to a small circular room constructed in the interior of a turret. This gallery, and the other apartments, were accessible by a broad oaken staircase; but the turret, or round room, could be reached also by a back spiral turnpike: so that a person who had entered it through the gallery, might escape, or could be conveyed away without again traversing the principal staircase.

Fastcastle, on the coast of Berwickshire, the residence or den of Logan, was the very opposite of Gowrie House; being a single square and massive feudal tower, standing on the brink of a steep and almost perpendicular black rock, which rose to the height of two hundred feet above the German Ocean. From the sea, it was completely inaccessible, unless to those who knew the secret of its steps cut in the rock, and could unlock the iron bolts and doors which defended them; and on the land side, the isthmus on which it stood was connected with the mainland by so narrow a neck, that any attempt to force its little drawbridge was hopeless. The distance from Gowrie House to Fastcastle, by sea, was about seventy miles; from Fastcastle to the English border, about twenty-five miles.

It is now time to introduce the reader to the most interesting part of this strange story: the letters of the conspirators themselves. It appears from these documents, which were not discovered until many years after the deep tragedy in which the conspiracy concluded, that early in the month of July 1600, Gowrie wrote to Logan appointing a secret meeting, to confer "on the purpose he knew of." This

letter is not now in existence; but it was brief, alluding to what had passed before between them, and stating that Logan's absence in Lothian had prevented Gowrie from coming to see him at Fastcastle.¹ On the 18th July 1600, Logan addressed a letter, which still remains, to the unknown conspirator already mentioned. It was in these terms:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—My duty with service remembered. Please you understand, my Lord of Go. and some others, his lordship's friends and weil-willers, who tender his lordship's better preferment, are upon the resolution you know, for the revenge of that cause; and his lordship has written to me anent that purpose; whereto I will accord, in case you will stand to and bear a part: and before ye resolve, meet me and Mr A. R. [Alexander Ruthven] in the Canongate on Tuesday the next week; and be as wary as ye can. Indeed, M. A. R. spoke with me four or five days since; and I have promised his lordship an answer within ten days at farthest.

"As for the purpose, how M. A. R. [Mr Alexander Ruthven,] and I have set down the course, it will be ane very easy done turn, and not far by² that form, with the like stratagem, whereof we had conference in Cap.h. But in case you and M. A. R. forgather,³ because he is somewhat *conseyt*,⁴ for God's sake be very wary with his reckless *toys of Padua*: for he told me one of the strangest tales of a nobleman of Padua that ever I heard in my life, resembling the like purpose." After assuring him that he might place implicit faith in Laird Bower, the bearer of the letter, Logan again thus alluded to the plot:—

"Always to our purpose, I think it best for our plat⁴ that we meet all at my house of Fastcastle: for I have concluded with M. A. R. how I think it shall be meetest to be convoyed quietest in a boat by sea; at which time, up-

on sure advertisement, I shall have the place very quiet and well provided.

"And as I receive your answer, I will post this bearer to my lord. And therefore, I pray you, as you love your own life, as it is not a matter of mowise,⁶ be circumspect in all things, and take no fear but all shall be well."

Logan then went on to warn his friend not to reveal anything of the plot either to Gowrie's old tutor, Mr William Rhynd, or to his brother Lord Home, before "the turn were done." He thus concluded:—

"When you have read, send this letter back again with the bearer, that I may see it burnt myself; for so is the fashion in such errands; and, if you please, write your answer on the back hereof, in case ye will take my word for the credit of the bearer. And use all expedition; for the turn wald not⁷ be long delayed. Ye know the king's hunting will be shortly; and then shall be the best time, as M. A. R. has assured me that my lord has resolved to enterprise that matter."⁸

This letter of Logan's was dated from Fastcastle, 18th July; and on the same day he sent the following letter, connected with the conspiracy, to Laird Bower, from his house in the Canongate of Edinburgh, informing him of a second letter "concerning the purpose which he had received from Gowrie."

"LAIRD BOWER,—I pray you hast you fast to me about the errand I told you, and we shall confer at length of all things. I have received a new letter from my Lord of Go. concerning the purpose that M. A. his lordship's brother, spake to me before; and I perceive I may have advantage of Dirlton in case his other matter take effect, as we hope it shall. Always, I beseech you, be at me the morn⁹ at even; for I have assured his lordship's servant that I shall send you over the water within three days, with a full resolution of all my will anent¹⁰ all

¹ Examinations of George Sprot, printed in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 272.

² By; different from.

³ Forgather; meet.

⁴ *Conseyt*; flighty.

⁵ Plat; plot, scheme.

⁶ Mowise; *mows*—mummery.

⁷ Wald not; cannot.

⁸ Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 282, 283.

⁹ The morn; to-morrow.

¹⁰ Anent; touching.

purposes. As I shall indeed recommend you and your trustiness to his lordship, as ye shall find an honest recompense for your pains in the end. I care not for all the land I have in this kingdom, in case I get a grip¹ at Dirlton: for I esteem it the pleasantest dwelling in Scotland. For God's cause, keep all things very secret, that my lord, my brother, get no knowledge of our purposes; for I [wald] rather be eirdit² quick."³

Between the 18th of July, the date of both these letters, and the 27th of the same month, the conspirators appear to have met; and the manner in which the attempt was to be made was arranged. It only remained to fix the precise day. This appears from the following letter of Logan, sent to the unknown conspirator, from his house in the Canongate, on the 27th of July:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—All my harty duty with humble service remembered. Since I have taken on hand to enterprise with my Lo. of Go. [Lord of Gowrie,] your special and only best beloved, as we have set down the plat already, I will request you that ye will be very circumspect and wise, that no man get an advantage of us. I doubt not but ye know the peril to be both life, land, and honour, in case the matter be not wisely used. And for my own part, I shall have a special respect to my promise that I have made to his Lo. and M. A. his Lo. brother, although the scaffold were set up. If I cannot win to Falkland the first night, I shall be timely in St Johnston on the morn. Indeed, I lippened⁴ for my Lo. himself, or else M. A. his Lo. brother, at my house of Fastcastle, as I wrote to them both. Always I repose on your advertisement of the precise day with credit to the bearer; for howbeit he be but a silly, auld, gleid⁵ carle, I will answer for him that he shall be very true.

"I pray you, Sir, read, and either burn or send again with the bearer;

¹ Grip; hold.

² Eirdit quick; buried alive.

³ Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 283.

⁴ Looked for; expected.

⁵ Gleid; squinting.

for I dare hazard my life, and all I have else in the world, on his message, I have such proof of his constant truth. So commits you to Christ's holy protection."⁶

Two days after this, on the 29th July, and only a week before the attempt and fatal catastrophe, Logan sent Laird Bower with the following letter to Gowrie. I give it all, as every word of its contents is of importance:—

"My Lo.—My most humble duty, &c. At the receipt of your Lo. letter I am so comforted, especially at your Lo. purpose communicated to me therein, that I can neither utter my joy, nor find myself able how to encounter your Lo. with due thanks. Indeed, my Lord, at my being last in the town, M. A. your Lo. brother, imparted somewhat of your lordship's intention anent that matter unto me; and if I had not been busied about some turns of my own, I thought to have come over to S. Jo.⁷ and spoken with your Lo. Yet always, my Lo. I beseech your Lo. both for the safety of your honour, credit, and, more than that, your life, my life, and the lives of many others, who may, perhaps, innocently smart for that turn afterwards, in case it be revealed by any; and likewise the utter wrecking of our lands and houses, and extirpating of our names; look that we be all as sure as your Lo.; and I myself shall be for my own part; and then I doubt not but, with God's grace, we shall bring our matter to a fine,⁸ which shall bring contentment to us all that ever wished for the revenge of the Macchevalent⁹ massacring of our dearest friends.

"I doubt not but M. A. your Lo. brother, has informed your Lo. what course I laid down to bring all your Lo. associates to my house of Fastcastle by sea, where I should have all materials in readiness for their safe receiving a land, and into my house, making, as it were, but a matter of pastime in a boat on the sea, in this

⁶ Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 284.

⁷ St Johnston, or Perth.

⁸ End.

⁹ Machiavelian.

fair summer tide; and none other strangers to haunt my house while¹ we had concluded on the laying of our platt, which is already devised by Mr Alexander and me. And I would wish that your lordship would either come or send M. A. to me; and thereafter I should meet your Lo. in Leith, or quietly in Restalrig, where we should have prepared a fine *hattit kit*,² with sugar, confits, and wine, and thereafter confer on matters: and the sooner we brought our purpose to pass, it were the better, before harvest. Let not M. W. R. [Mr Wm. Rhynd,] your old pedagogue ken³ of your coming; but rather would I, if I dare be so bold to entreat your Lo. once to come and see my own house, where I have kept my Lo. Bo. [Lord Bothwell] in his greatest extremities, say the K. and his Council what they would. And in case God grant us a happy success in this errand, I hope both to have your Lo. and his Lo. with many others of your lovers and his, at a good dinner before I die. Always, I hope that the king's buck-hunting at Falkland this year shall prepare some dainty cheer for us against that dinner the next year. *Hoc jocose*, to animate your Lo. at this time; but afterwards we shall have better occasion to make merry.

"I protest my Lo. before God, I wish nothing with a better heart, nor⁴ to achieve to that which your Lo. would fain attain unto; and my continual prayer shall tend to that effect: and with the large spending of my lands, goods, yea the hazard of my life shall not affright me from that, although the scaffold were already set up, before I should falsify my promise to your Lo.; and persuade your Lo. thereof. I trow your Lo. has a proof of my constancy ere now.

"But, my Lo. whereas your Lo. desires, in my letter, that I crave my Lo. my brother's mind, anent this matter; I allutterly⁵ dissent from that,

that he should ever be a councillor thereto: for, in good faith, he will never help his friend, nor harm his foe. Your Lo. may confide more in this old man, the bearer hereof, my man Laird Bower, nor in my brother; for I lippen⁶ my life, and all I have else, in his hands: and I trow he would not spare to ride to hell's yett⁷ to pleasure me; and he is not beguiled of my part to him. Always, my Lo. when your Lo. has read my letter, deliver it to the bearer again, that I may see it burnt with my ain een;⁸ as I have sent your Lo. letter to your Lo. again: for so is the fashion, I grant. And I pray your Lo. rest fully persuaded of me, and of all that I have promised; for I am resolved, howbeit I were to die the morn,⁹ I man¹⁰ entreat your Lo. to exspede¹¹ Bower, and give him strait direction, on pain of his life, that he take never a wink of sleep until he see me again, or else he will utterly undo us. I have already sent another letter to the gentleman your Lo. kens,¹² as the bearer will inform your Lo. of his answer and forwardness with your Lo.; and I shall show your Lo. farther, at meeting, when and where your Lo. shall think meetest. To which time, and ever, commits your Lo. to the protection of Almighty God.—From Gunnisgreen, the 29th of July, 1600.

"Your Lo. own sworn and bound man to obey and serve, with efald¹³ and ever ready service, to his utter power, to his life's end. RESTALRIG.

"Prays your Lo. hold me excused for my unseemly letter, quilk is not so well written as mister¹⁴ were; for I durst not let ony¹⁵ of my writers ken of it, but took two sundry idle days to it myself.

"I will never forget the good sport that M. A. your Lo. brother, told me of a nobleman of Padua: it comes so oft to my memory; and indeed, it is a

¹ While; until.

² A Scottish dish, composed of coagulated milk, and eaten with rich cream and sugar.

³ Know.

⁴ Nor; than.

⁵ Allutterly; entirely.

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⁶ Lippen; trust.

⁷ Hell's gate.

⁸ Own eyes.

⁹ Although. I were to die to-morrow.

¹⁰ Must. ¹¹ Haste.

¹² Knows.

¹³ True.

¹⁴ Need were. ¹⁵ Any.

*paras teur*¹ to this purpose we have in hand.”²

Two days after the date of this letter to Gowrie, on the 31st of July, Logan, being still at his house of Gun’s Green, wrote the following letter to the unknown conspirator:—

“ RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,— My harty duty remembered. Ye know I told you, at our last meeting in the Canongate, that M. A. R. my Lord of Gowrie’s brother, had spoken with me anent the matter of our conclusion; and, for my own part, I shall not be hindmost. And sensyne³ I gat a letter fra his lordship’s self for that same purpose; and upon the receipt thereof, understanding his lordship’s frankness and forwardness in it, God kens⁴ if my heart was not lifted ten stegess.⁵ I posted this same bearer till his lordship, to whom you may concredit all your heart in that as well as I; for an⁶ it were my very soul, I durst make him messenger thereof, I have sic⁷ experience of his truth in many other things. He is a silly, auld, gleid⁸ carle,⁹ but wondrous honest. And as he has reported to me his lordship’s answer, I think all matters shall be concluded at my house of Fastcastle; for I and M. A. R. concluded that you should come with him and his lordship, and only ane other man with you, being but only four in company, intil¹⁰ one of the great fishing-boats by sea, to my house; where ye shall land as safely as on Leith shore. And the house, agane¹¹ his lordship’s coming, to be quiet: and when you are about half a mile from shore, to gar set forth a waff.¹² But, for God’s sake, let neither any knowledge come to my lord my brother’s ears, nor yet to M. W. R. my lordship’s auld pedagogue; for my brother is ‘kittle to shoe behind,’¹³

¹ Apropos, in point.

² Pitcairn’s Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 284, 286.

³ Since then.

⁴ Knows. ⁵ Stages, degrees. ⁶ If.

⁷ Such. ⁸ Old, squinting.

⁹ Carle, a man past fifty years of age.

¹⁰ In.

¹¹ Agane. The house to be kept quiet, awaiting his lordship’s coming.

¹² To cause set forth a signal.

¹³ Difficult to shoe behind; not to be trusted.

and dare not enterprise for fear: and the other will dissuade us from our purpose with reasons of religion; which I can never abide.

“ I think there is none of a noble heart, or carries a stomach worth a penny, but they would be glad to see a contented revenge of Grey Steil’s death.¹⁴ And the sooner the better, or else we may be marred and frustrated: and, therefore, pray his lordship be quick. And bid M. A. remember the sport he told me of Padua; for I think with myself that the cogitation on that should stimulate his lordship. And, for God’s cause, use all your courses *cum discrezione*. Fail not, Sir, to send back again this letter: for M. A. learnt me that fashion, that I may see it destroyed myself. So, till your coming, and ever, commits you heartily to Christ’s holy protection.—From Gunnisgreen, the last of July, 1600.”

These letters explain themselves. Their import cannot be mistaken: their authenticity since the recent discovery of the originals cannot be questioned; they still exist;¹⁵ and although they do not open up all the particulars of the intended attempt, they establish the reality of the Gowrie conspiracy beyond the possibility of a doubt. The first proves that the Master of Ruthven and Logan had set down the course or plot for the preferment of Gowrie and the revenge of his father’s death; that the conspirators were to meet at Fastcastle; and that they had fixed “the king’s hunting” as the most favourable time for their attempt. Logan, it is seen from the same letter, did not think his brother, Lord Home, or Gowrie’s old tutor, Mr William Rhynd, by any means safe persons to be intrusted with the secret of the conspiracy. In the second letter to Bower, we have a glance at the rich bribe by which Gowrie had secured

¹⁴ Grey Steil, a popular name of Gowrie’s father, taken from an old romance called “Grey-Steil.”

¹⁵ In the General Register-House, Edinburgh.

the assistance of Logan—the estate of Dirleton; and in the third, his resolution to keep his promise “although the scaffold were set up,” with his expectation to have speedy intimation sent him of the precise day when the attempt was to be made, and his presence required at St Johnston. Logan’s letter to Gowrie is still more minute. It contains the determination to revenge the Machiavelian massacre of their dearest friends; the intended rendezvous of the associates at Fastcastle, who, under the mask of a pleasure party by sea, were to be conveyed into that stronghold; the previous secret conference to be held at Restalrig over their “*hattit kit and wine*;” the good cheer and happy success which the king’s buck-hunting was to bring them; the solemn and earnest injunctions of secrecy,—life and lands, name and fame, hanging on the issue; the allusion to the strange tale of Padua, so similar to their present purpose, that it seems to have haunted the “consey” or high-wrought imagination of Mr Alexander Ruthven; the necessity of destroying their letters: all this is contained in Logan’s letter to Gowrie himself; and in his last letter to the unknown conspirator, we have the direction how the signal is to be given at sea to those who were to be on the look-out from Fastcastle; the exultation and joy at Gowrie’s frankness and forwardness; the last consultation appointed to be at Fastcastle; Logan’s candid character of himself, as utterly unable to abide all arguments from religion; his exhortations to be speedy, and his anticipation of a glorious revenge for the death of “Grey Steil,” the affectionate *sobriquet* or nickname of the late Earl of Gowrie. All this is so clearly established by the correspondence, and so completely proves the existence of Gowrie’s plot for the surprise of the king, and the meeting of the conspirators at Fastcastle, that he who doubts must be too desperate in his scepticism to be reached by any evidence whatever. But we must proceed.

This last letter of Logan’s was

written on Thursday, the 31st July; and all that passed in the secret conclave of the conspirators, during the three succeeding days, till the night of Monday the 4th of August, is a blank. On that night Gowrie called his chamberlain, Andrew Henderson, into his bedchamber and commanded him to be ready to ride on the morrow early with his brother, the Master, to Falkland, and to bring back with speed any letter, or message, which he might receive from him.¹

The morning of Tuesday, the 5th of August, found the king and his nobles in the great park at Falkland, ready to mount on horseback, and proceed to their sport. It was still early, between six and seven o’clock: all was bustle and preparation; and the king stood beside the stables surrounded by his hounds and huntsmen, when Alexander Ruthven, Gowrie’s younger brother, came up, and, with a low courtesy, kneeling and uncovering, craved a moment’s private audience on matter of the utmost moment. His expression was perturbed, his manner hurried; and the king, expecting a communication of importance, walked aside with him. Ruthven then declared, that he, the evening before, had met a suspicious-looking fellow without the walls of St Johnston, with his face muffled in a cloak; and, perceiving him to be terrified and astonished when questioned, he had seized him; and, on searching, had found a large pot full of gold pieces under his cloak. This treasure, with the man who carried it, he had secured, he said, in a small chamber in Gowrie House; and he now begged the king to ride with him to Perth on the instant, and make sure of it for himself, as he had not even revealed the discovery to his brother the earl. James at first disclaimed having any right to money thus found; but when the Master, to one of his questions, stated that it seemed foreign gold, the vision of crowns of the sun and Spanish priests rose to the royal suspicion; and he was about to despatch

¹ Henderson’s Declaration, Pitcairn’s Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 175.

some servant of his own, to ride instantly with a warrant to the provost, and seize the treasure, when Ruthven strongly protested against it : declaring that if either the magistrates or Gowrie got their fingers on the gold, it might chance that very few pieces would ever come into his majesty's purse ; and that all that he implored, in recompense for his fidelity, was that the king would ride with him to Perth, see the treasure, and judge with his own eyes.

The court was now on horseback ; the morning wearing on ; the baying of the hounds, and cheering of the huntsmen, told that the game was found ; and the king, impatiently putting an end to the interview, promised Ruthven an answer after he had killed the buck. James then galloped off ; but the story haunted him ; and on the first check he sent for Ruthven, who lingered near at hand, and whispered to him that he had resolved, the moment the chase was over, to accompany him to Perth. The young man instantly despatched Andrew Henderson, the chamberlain, who, in obedience to Gowrie's orders the night before, had, with Andrew Ruthven, accompanied him to Falkland ; bidding him gallop to Perth, and tell Gowrie that the king would be there within a brief space, and slenderly attended.

When the chase was ended, which lasted till near eleven, the king surprised his courtiers by telling them he meant to ride immediately to St Johnston, to speak with the Earl of Gowrie ; and without giving himself or his nobles time to send for fresh horses, or waiting, as was usual, for the "curry of the deer,"¹ he rode off with Ruthven at so furious a pace, that he was some miles on the road before Lennox, or any of his suite, overtook him. All this time Ruthven had been agitated and restless ; now pressing the king to finish the chase ; now urging him not to wait for fresh horses ; now insisting that neither Lennox, Mar, nor any number of his

nobles should follow him, as it might spoil all : and this to such a degree that James, as he pushed on, began to suspect and hesitate, and calling Lennox aside, told him the strange errand he was riding on ; asking him if Ruthven, his brother-in-law, had ever shewn any symptoms of derangement. The duke pronounced the story utterly improbable ; but affirmed he had never seen any thing like madness in Ruthven. "At all events," said James, "do not you, Lennox, fail to follow me into the room where this fellow and his treasure is." This private conference was not unobserved by Ruthven. He had a short time before despatched his other servant, Andrew Ruthven, to ride forward with a second message to Perth, and now coming up close to the king, implored him to make none living acquainted with their purpose, till he had himself seen the fellow and the treasure. It seems to have been at this moment that Sir Thomas Erskine, who had overtaken the king on the road, privately asked Lennox how it came that Ruthven had got the king's ear, and carried off his majesty from his sport ; to which Lennox jocularly answered, "Peace, man ; we shall all be turned into gold."² The whole party then rode forward ; and on coming within a mile of Perth, Ruthven, telling the king he must give warning to his brother, galloped on before.

We must now for a moment turn to Gowrie, whom Henderson, on his arrival at Gowrie House, found, with two friends, in his chamber. He instantly left them, and inquired, secretly and earnestly, what word he had brought from his brother : had he sent a letter ; how had the king taken with the Master ; who were with his majesty at the hunting, many or few ; what noblemen, what names ? To these hurried questions Henderson answered by giving the message sent by young Ruthven—that the king would be with him incontinent, and he must prepare dinner. He added, that James had received the Master kindly, and laid his hand on his

¹ French, *curer* ; to cleanse ; the ripping up and cleansing the deer.

² Lloyd's Worthies, p. 783.

shoulder when he did his courtesy : that his majesty had sundry of his own suite with him, and some Englishmen ; and that the only nobleman he noticed was my lord duke. This was at ten o'clock.¹ Henderson then went to his own house, pulled off his boots, and returned to Gowrie House about eleven, when the earl commanded him to put on his "*secret*,² and plate sleeves," as he would require his assistance to seize a Highlandman in the Shoe Gate. At half-past twelve Gowrie took his dinner, having, as his guests, three friends of the neighbourhood ; and as they sat at table, Andrew Ruthven, the Master's second messenger, entered the room, and whispered to the earl. Soon after came the Master himself, upon which Gowrie and his friends rose ; and now for the first time openly alluding to the royal visit, he assembled his servants, and walked to the Inch or meadow near the town, where he met the king.

James's train did not exceed twelve or fifteen persons, including Lennox, Mar, Sir Thomas Erskine, John Ramsay his page, Dr Hugh Herries, Lords Lindores and Inchaffray, with a few others. They wore their green hunting-dresses, and were wholly without armour ; a horn slung over their shoulder, and a sword or deer-knife at their girdle, being all they carried. Gowrie's servants and followers amounted nearly to fourscore ; but many of these must have been townsmen and lookers-on. On coming to Gowrie House the king called for a drink, and was somewhat annoyed at having to wait long for his welcome cup, and more than an hour for his dinner. During this interval, Alexander Ruthven sent for the key of the long room, called the Gallery Chamber, which immediately adjoined the cabinet where the king dined. At the end of this gallery was another apartment, which opened into a circular room, formed in the interior of a turret ; and this room, it is important to observe,

could be entered, not only by the door at the end of the gallery, but by another door communicating with a back-stair or turnpike, called the Black Turnpike. Soon after the king had sat down to dinner, Gowrie, who waited upon him, sent for Henderson, and taking him aside secretly, bade him go to his brother in the gallery. He obeyed ; found Mr Alexander there, and almost instantly after was joined by the earl himself, who commanded him to remain where he was, and obey the Master's orders.³ Henderson was now fully armed, all except the head : he had noted that the tale about seizing a Highland thief in the Shoe Gate was a false pretence ; and beginning to suspect some treason, asked in an agitated tone, what they were about to do with him ? The only reply of Gowrie and the Master was to point to the little chamber, make him enter the door, and lock him up.

All this occupied but a few minutes, and Gowrie then returned to the king, who was sitting at his dessert ; whilst the duke and the rest of the suite were dining in the next room. They had nearly finished their repast, when James, in a bantering manner, accused Gowrie of having been so long in foreign parts as to have forgotten his Scottish courtesies. "Wherefore, my lord," said he, "since ye have neglected to drink either to me or my nobles, who are your guests, I must drink to you my own welcome. Take this cup, and pledge them the *king's scoll*⁴ in my name." Gowrie, accordingly, calling for wine, joined the duke and his fellows, who were getting up from table ; and at this instant Alexander Ruthven, seizing the moment when the king was alone, whispered him that now was the time to go. James, rising up, bade him call Sir Thomas Erskine ; but he evaded the message, and Erskine never received it. Lennox, too, remembering the king's injunctions, spoke of following his majesty ; but Gowrie prevented him, saying, his highness had retired

¹ Henderson's Declaration, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 176.

² A secret shirt of mail worn under the clothes.

³ Henderson's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 177.

⁴ The king's scoll ; the king's health.

on a quiet errand, and would not be disturbed;¹ after which, he opened the door leading to his pleasure-ground, and with Lennox, Lindores, and some others, passed into the garden. Thus really cut off from assistance, but believing that he would be followed by Lennox, or Erskine, James now followed Ruthven up a stair, and through a suite of various chambers, all of them opening into each other, the Master locking every door as they passed; and observing, with a smile, that now they had the fellow sure enough. At last they entered the small round room already mentioned. On the wall hung a picture with a curtain before it; beside it stood a man in armour; and as the king started back in alarm, Ruthven locked the door, put on his hat, drew the dagger from the side of the armed man, and tearing the curtain from the picture, shewed the well-known features of the late Earl of Gowrie, his father. "Whose face is that?" said he, advancing the dagger with one hand to the king's breast, and pointing with the other to the picture. "Who murdered my father? Is not thy conscience burdened by his innocent blood? Thou art now my prisoner, and must be content to follow our will, and to be used as we list. Seek not to escape; utter but a cry, [James was now looking at the window, and beginning to speak;] make but a motion to open the window, and this dagger is in thy heart." The king, although alarmed by this fierce address, and the suddenness of the danger, did not lose his presence of mind: and as Henderson was evidently no willing accomplice, he took courage to remonstrate with the Master: reminded him of the dear friendship he had borne him; and, "as for your father's death," said he, "I had no hand in it; it was my council's doing; and should ye now take my life, what preferment will it bring you? Have I not both sons and daughters? You can never be king of Scotland; and I have many good

subjects who will revenge my death." Ruthven seemed struck with this, and swore he neither wanted his blood nor his life. "What racks² it then," said the king, "that you should not take off your hat in your prince's presence?" Upon this Ruthven uncovered, and James resumed. "What crave ye, an ye seek not my life?" "But a promise, sir," was the reply. "What promise?" "Sir," said Ruthven, "my brother will tell you." "Go fetch him then," rejoined the king; and to induce him to obey, he gave his oath, that till his return he would neither cry out nor open the window. Ruthven consented; commanded Henderson to keep the king at his peril; and left the room, locking the door behind him.

James now, for a moment, had time to breathe; and turning to Henderson, he asked him how he came there. The unhappy man declared he had been shut in like a dog. Would Gowrie do him any mischief? Henderson answered he should die first. "Open the window, then," said James; and scarce had this been done, or rather when it was being done, Ruthven broke into the room again, and swearing there was no remedy, ran in upon the king, seized him by the wrists, and attempted to bind him with a garter or silk cord which he had in his hands. James, by a strong effort, threw himself loose, exclaiming he was a free prince, and would never be bound; and Henderson at this moment wrenching away the cord, the king "leapt free," and had almost reached the window, when Ruthven again seized him by the throat with one hand, and thrust the other into his mouth, to prevent him giving the alarm. But James, now rendered desperate, and exerting his utmost strength, dragged his assailant to the window, and throwing his head half out, though Ruthven's hand was still on his throat, cried out, "Treason! help! Earl of Mar, I am murdered!" Ruthven then dragged him back into the chamber, upbraiding Henderson as a cowardly villain, who would bring

¹ Lennox's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 172.

² What racks; what forbids.

death upon them all, and attempted to draw his sword, which James prevented by grasping his right hand.¹ Henderson during this, unlocked the door of the room, and then stood trembling and panic-struck, whilst a desperate wrestle continued between the king and Ruthven.

Leaving James in this struggle for life, we must turn for an instant to Gowrie, who had led Lennox and the other courtiers into the garden. Whilst there, Cranston, one of his attendants, ran up, and informed them that the king had left the castle by the back way, and was riding over the Inch, upon which Gowrie called to horse; and he, Lennox, and the rest, hurrying down the great staircase, and shouting for their horses, some one asked the porter in the courtyard, if the king had passed. He declared he had not; and persisted in his denial, although his master abused him as a lying varlet. Gowrie, upon this, ran back into the house, observing to Mar, he would ascertain the truth; and returning within a few minutes, assured them that the king had really gone forth, and must now have reached the South Inch. Scarcely, however, was this falsehood uttered, when it was confuted; for at this moment James's loud cry of treason and murder was heard; and, looking up, they saw the king's face at the window of the turret, the features red and flushed with exertion, and a hand on his throat.² All was now horror and confusion. Sir Thomas Erskine collared Gowrie, exclaiming, "Traitor, thou shalt die! This is thy work!" but was felled to the ground by Andrew Ruthven, whilst Gowrie asserted his innocence. Lennox's first impulse was to save the king; and he, Mar, and some others, rushed up the great staircase to the hall; but finding the door locked, began to batter it with a ladder which lay hard by.³ John Ramsay, one of the royal suite, was more fortunate.

¹ Henderson's Declaration in Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 178.

² Lennox's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 173. Christie's Declaration, ibid. p. 187.

³ Ibid. Lindores' Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 181.

He remembered the back entry; and running swiftly up the turnpike stair to the top, dashed open the door of the round chamber with his foot, and found himself in the presence of the king and Ruthven, who were wrestling in the middle of the chamber. James, with Ruthven's head under his arm, had thrown him down almost on his knees, whilst the Master still grasped the king's throat.⁴ Ramsay was hampered by a hawk, a favourite bird of James's, which he held on his wrist; but throwing her off, and drawing his whinger,⁵ he made an ineffectual blow at Ruthven; the king calling out to strike low, as the traitor had on a pyne doublet.⁶ Ramsay then stabbed him twice in the lower part of the body. The king, making a strong effort, pushed him backwards through the door, down the stairs; and at this moment Sir Thomas Erskine and Dr Herries rushing up the turnpike, and encountering the unhappy youth, bleeding, and staggering upon the steps, despatched him with their swords. As he lay in his last agony, he turned his face to them, and said, feebly, "Alas! I had not the wyte o't."⁷

All this passed so rapidly, that Ramsay had only time to catch a glance of a figure in armour, standing near the king, but motionless. When he next looked, it had disappeared. This seeming apparition was Henderson, still trembling, and in amazement, from the scene he had witnessed; but who, seeing the door open, glided down the turnpike, and, as it turned out, fled instantly from the house; passing, in his flight, over the master's dead body.⁸ At this moment, as Erskine and Ramsay were congratulating the king, a new tumult was heard at the end of the gallery; and they had scarcely

⁴ Ramsay's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 183.

⁵ Whinger; a hunting knife.

⁶ Pyne doublet; a concealed shirt of mail worn under the clothes.

⁷ I had not the blame of it.

⁸ Henderson's Declaration, Ramsay's Declaration, and Sir Thomas Erskine's Declaration, all printed in Pitcairn, vol. ii. pp. 175-184 inclusive.

time to hurry James into the adjoining chamber, when Gowrie himself, furious from passion, and armed with a rapier in each hand, rushed along the gallery, followed by seven of his servants, with drawn swords. His vengeance had been roused to the utmost pitch, by his having stumbled over the bleeding body of his brother; and swearing a dreadful oath that the traitors who had murdered him should die, he threw himself desperately upon Erskine and his companions, who were all wounded in the first onset, and fought at great odds, there being eight to four.¹ Yet the victory was not long doubtful; for, some one calling out that the king was slain, Gowrie, as if paralysed with horror, dropped the points of his weapons, and Ramsay, throwing himself within his guard, passed his sword through his body, and slew him on the spot. The servants, seeing their master fall, gave way, and were driven out of the gallery; and Lennox, Mar, and the rest, who were still thundering with their hammers on the outside of the great door, having made themselves known to the king and his friends within, were joyfully admitted. So effectually, however, had Ruthven secured this door, that it was only by passing a hammer through one of the shattered boards, and with it forcibly wrenching off the lock, that their entrance was effected. The first thing that met their eyes was the dead body of Gowrie lying on the floor, and the king standing unharmed beside it, although still breathless from the recent struggle, and disordered in his dress. At this moment Grahame of Balgone, one of the gentlemen who had accompanied the king from Falkland, found a silk garter lying amongst the bent or rough grass with which the floor of the round chamber was covered; and James immediately recognised it as the same with which Ruthven had attempted to bind his hands.² The

king then knelt down, and surrounded by his nobles, who were all on their knees, devoutly thanked God for his deliverance, and prayed that the life which had been thus signally preserved, might be devoted to the welfare of his people.

Scarcely, however, had they risen from their act of gratitude, when a new danger began to threaten them. The city bell was heard ringing, mingled with shouts and cries of vengeance, from an immense mob who beset the outside of Gowrie House, and threatened to blow it up, and bury them in the ruins. Andrew Ruthven and Violet Ruthven, two near relatives of the family of Gowrie, had been busy in rousing the citizens; and, running wildly through the streets, vented curses and maledictions on "the bloody butchers" who had murdered their young provost and his brother. Nor did many spare to threaten the king himself; crying out, "Come down, come down, thou son of Seignor Davie! thou hast slain a better man than thyself. Come down, green coats, thieves and traitors! limmers that have slain these innocents. May God let never name o' you have such plants of your ain!"³ Amid this hubbub, and storm of lamentation and vengeance, James ordered the magistrates to be admitted into the house; and having informed them of all that had happened, commanded them to silence the alarm-bell, and quiet the people on their peril; which they at last with difficulty effected. He then ordered them to take care of the dead bodies; and on searching Gowrie's person, there was found in the pocket of his doublet, a little parchment bag full of "magical characters and words of enchantment," which his tutor, Rhyn, recognised as the same he had discovered him wearing at Padua.⁴ A belief in sorcery was, as is well known, universal in these days; and such superstitious credit did both king and people give to the little bag of caba-

¹ Thomas Robertson's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 196; also, ibid. p. 197; Ramsay's Declaration, ibid. pp. 183, 184; and Sir Thomas Erskine's Declaration, ibid. p. 182; William Robertson's Declaration, ibid. p. 197.

² Grahame's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 184; also, p. 217.

³ Grahame's Declaration, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 197-199.

⁴ Declaration of Rhyn, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 218-220.

listic words, that they averred that no blood had issued from the wound till the spell was removed from the body, after which it gushed out profusely.

James now took horse, and although it was already eight in the evening, rode to Falkland amid crowds of his subjects, who poured in from all quarters to testify their joy at his escape. Next day the news having been brought to Edinburgh, nothing could exceed the enthusiastic demonstrations of the city; and the same scene was repeated, with still louder and more affectionate welcome, when the

king, after a brief retirement at Falkland, passed over the Forth, and entered his capital. The Cross was hung with tapestry; the whole city, led by the judges and magistrates, met him on the sands at Leith; and from thence he rode in triumph, and amid an immense congregation of all classes of his people, to the Cross, where Mr Patrick Galloway preached to the multitude, gave the story of the treason, and described the miraculous escape of the monarch. His sermon still remains, an extraordinary specimen of the pulpit eloquence of the times.¹

CHAPTER XII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1600—1603.

THE general gratulation manifested at the escape of the king from the treason of Gowrie, was not without its alloy. Though almost all believed in the reality of the conspiracy, a section of the Kirk demurred and doubted; and as the death of both the brothers had involved the particulars of the plot in extreme obscurity, the ministers not only declared it questionable that any treason had been intended, but, after a while, started the extravagant theory that the plot was a conspiracy of the king against Gowrie, not of Gowrie against the king. To examine or refute this hypothesis, after the facts which have been given, would be worse than idle; and we are not to be surprised that the incredulity of the Kirk should have incensed the king. But James adopted an unwise mode of refutation. Instead of simply insisting on the great features of the story, on the leading facts which were indisputably proved by the evidence of Lennox,

Mar, Erskine, and Ramsay, and throwing aside all minor matters and apparent contradictions, which, considering the rapidity, terror, and tumult accompanying the event, confirmed rather than weakened the proof: he forgot his dignity; held repeated conferences with the recusant ministers; argued, cavilled, remonstrated, and attempted in vain to explain and reconcile every minute particular. The effect of all this was precisely what might have been anticipated: Mr Robert Bruce, and his little sceptical conclave of brethren, were quite as ingenuous in their special pleading as the king; and not only obstinately refused to accuse Gowrie in their pulpits of any plot against the royal person, but insolently insinuated that their two favourites had been murdered. James, finding them immovable, banished them from the capital; and interdicted them, under pain of death, from preaching in any part of Scotland.

¹ Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 248.

This severity brought four of the recusants, Balcanquel, Watson, Hall, and Balfour, to reason; and they declared themselves thoroughly satisfied of the truth of Gowrie's treason. But Bruce was inexorable. He considered that the question involved not only the truth of the conspiracy, but the spiritual independence of the Kirk; peremptorily refused to exculpate the king, or believe in his report; and was banished to France.¹ Extreme measures were then adopted against the family of Ruthven; and in a parliament which assembled in the succeeding month of November, the revolting spectacle was exhibited of the trial for treason of the livid corpses of these unhappy brothers; which, after the doom of forfeiture had been pronounced, were hauled to the gibbet, hanged and quartered. Their quarters were then exposed in the most conspicuous places of Perth, Stirling, and Dundee, and their heads fixed on the top of the prison in Edinburgh. Nor was the ignominy heaped upon the dead greater than the severity against the living. An attempt was made, on the very night of the catastrophe, to seize the two younger brothers of the house, who, at the time, were living with their unhappy mother at Dunkeld; but a vague report of danger had reached her, and they had escaped in disguise, accompanied by their tutor, who brought them in safety to Berwick.² On the king's return to Falkland, on the night of the 5th of August, the sister of Gowrie, Mrs Beatrice Ruthven, who was maid of honour to the queen, was dismissed and banished from court. By an act of the same parliament which inflicted the forfeiture, the very name of Ruthven was abolished; and the brethren and posterity of the house of Gowrie declared to be for ever incapable of enjoying inheritance, place, or dignity, in Scotland. Such was the avidity with which the favourites of the court sought, for their own profit, to hunt

down this ill-fated family, and fulfil the stern wishes of the king, that but for the generous protection of England, not a male of the house of Ruthven would have been left.

The relations between Elizabeth and James, previous to the conspiracy, had been, we have seen, far from friendly; and this connivance of the queen at the concealment of the young Ruthvens, with other suspicious reports which arose immediately after the catastrophe, created a strong impression in the mind of the king that the plot had been fostered in England. It was remembered that Gowrie had been admitted, immediately previous to the attempt, into the most intimate confidence of the English queen; it was observed that Rhynd, Gowrie's tutor, had been found destroying letters at the moment he was apprehended; it was reported that Nicolson, the English resident at Edinburgh, had been seen waiting, early on the morning of the 6th of August, on the shore at Leith, and had whispered to a friend, who had betrayed his secret, that he was expecting strange news from the other side of the water. The Earl of Mar accused Lord Wylloughby, the governor of Berwick, to the king, as being privy to the plot; but his only evidence seems to have been Wylloughby's intimacy with Gowrie at the court of England; and this high-minded and brave soldier, deeming his character far above such suspicion, did not descend to confute the charge.³ All these things, however, made an impression. When Nicolson assured the king of his devout thankfulness for his escape, the only answer he received, was an incredulous smile from James; and many of the highest rank in Scotland, and best entitled to credit, persisted in tracing the whole conspiracy to England. Many, on the other hand, insisted on the total want of all direct evidence of Gowrie's guilt; and as the letters of Logan of Restalrig had not then come to light, it was difficult to confute such sceptics. Cranston, Craig-

¹ Spottiswood, p. 461.

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Sir R. Cecil, August 11, 1600. *Ibid.*, August 15, 1600.

³ MS. Letter, State-paper office, Nicolson to Cecil, 6th August 1600. *Ibid.*, 11th August 1600. *Ibid.*, B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil.

engelt, and Baron, all of them servants of Gowrie, who were executed for their participation in the enterprise, had been examined by torture; and both in the agony of the "boots," and afterwards on the scaffold, confessed nothing which could implicate their unhappy master or themselves; and the letters of Nicolson, Lord Scrope, and Sir William Bowes, made little scruple of throwing the chief guilt upon the king.

Amid all this obscurity, recrimination, and conjecture, James despatched Captain Preston to carry an account of his escape to Elizabeth; and she, in her turn, sent down Sir Harry Brunker with a singular letter, written wholly in her own hand, which began with congratulations, and concluded in a tone of mingled menace and reproach. Her anger had been raised on a subject which never failed to produce in her mind unusual excitement—James's intrigues as to the succession; and after a few lines on her joy at his escape, she attacked him in the following bitter terms, on his impatience for her death, and the indecent haste of his preparations:—

" And though a king I be, yet hath my funerals been prepared, as I hear, long ere, I suppose, their labour shall be needful; and do hear too much of that daily, as I may have a good memorial that I am mortal: and withall so be they, too, that make such preparation beforehand; whereat I smile, supposing that such facts may make them readier for it than I.

" Think not but how wily soever things be carried, they are so well known that they may do more harm to *others* than to me. Of this my pen hath run farther than at first I meant, when the memory of a prince's end made me call to mind such usage, which too many countries talks of, and I cannot stop my ears from. If you will needs know what I mean, I have been pleased to impart to this my servant some part thereof; to whom I will refer me; and will pray God to give you grace to know what best becomes you.

" Your loving Sister and Cousin." 1

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Let-

What Elizabeth here alluded to by the memory of a prince's end is somewhat obscure; and her ambassador's explanation, to which she referred him, does not appear: but the subjects which had especially excited her wrath, were James's correspondence with the Earl of Essex, and his recent reception of Sir Edmund Ashfield, the same knight who had been so unceremoniously kidnapped by Bowes and Guevara, and Lord Wylloughby. It was mortifying enough to a princess clinging, as still she did, to the last remnant of life and glory, to know that her subjects (as she bitterly said) "were looking to the rising sun;" but to find them in the very act of worship, chafed her to the quick: and perhaps nothing weighed heavier against Essex, than his suspected favour for James. There is a remarkable paper preserved, in which Ashfield gave his opinion to the Scottish king on the best mode of accomplishing his great object; and although no letters between James and Essex have been discovered, there seems to be little doubt that this unfortunate nobleman, now a prisoner in the Tower, had engaged to support the claim of the Scottish monarch with the whole weight of his influence. In his advices, Ashfield complimented James on the wisdom and judgment which had distinguished his policy towards the state and people of England. It was a great matter, he observed, that none feared his future government, or had taken offence at his person. He instructed him to employ every effort to gain the common lawyers, who possessed the "gainfullest" offices; were rich and politic men, more feared than beloved by the people, yet very powerful in the state. He ought next, he said, to secure the clergy, who possessed the greatest influence in the universities; were rich; and had most of the people, and many of the nobility and gentry, at their devotion. He should assure them that he had no intention of altering the

ters, Scotland. Copy of her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand, and sent by Sir Henry Brunker, August 21, 1600.

state of religion, or their livings; which, according to the then computation of the parishes in England, amounted to nine thousand seven hundred and twenty-seven. And if (Ashfield added) the king declared his inclination to exempt them from the heavy taxes which they now paid, it would go far to bring over the whole body to his service. He also advised the king to have letters ready, at the time of Elizabeth's death, to some one or two of the chiefest "men of command" in every shire and corporation, and promised to procure him a list, not only of the names of such; but also of the collectors and tellers of the crown rents in England, to whom he might give speedy and special directions, by gracious letters, and win them to his service. His last remark related to the "citizens of London," a body of men whom he described as rich, strong, and well governed; who would stand firm to the preservation of their wealth, and keep themselves neutral till they saw which of the competitors was likely to prove the strongest, and how the game would go.¹

Immediately after the meeting of that parliament, in November, in which the forfeiture of the Gowries took place, some unhappy differences broke out between the king and his queen; this princess having shewn a deeper commiseration for the Ruthven family than James approved of. Amongst the innumerable reports which had arisen, after the catastrophe, it had been whispered that jealousy had lent its sting to the royal wrath. But although Anne of Denmark was sufficiently gay and thoughtless to give some ground for the imputation, the common story of her passion for the Master of Ruthven seems to rest on nothing more than the merest rumour. She imprudently had given her countenance to that party at court which opposed the extreme severity of the king. It was reported that she had secretly sent for Beatrix Ruthven, and favoured her with a midnight interview in the palace. She suspected that intrigues

were carrying on against her; and, on one occasion, if we may believe Nicolson the envoy of Elizabeth, was so far overcome by passion, that she openly upbraided James with a plot for her imprisonment; and warned him that he would not find her so easy a prey as an Earl of Gowrie. The probability, however, is, that all this was much exaggerated by the gossiping propensities of Nicolson: for the royal couple, whom he represented as on very evil terms on the 31st of October, had been described, in a letter written only two days before, as exceedingly loving, and almost ultra-uxorious.² In the midst of this alternate matrimonial shade and sunshine, Anne gave birth to a prince, afterwards the unfortunate Charles the First; whose baptism was held, with great state and pageantry, on the 30th of December.³

Captain Preston, James's ambassador, now returned from the court of England, and brought a more amicable letter from the queen than her former ironical epistle. In speaking of Gowrie's treason, she declared her fervent wishes, that "the bottom of such a cankered malady should be fathomed to the uttermost;" and in alluding to the sorceries of the earl, and the familiar spirits who were said to wait on his will, expressed her conviction that "none were left in hell," so detestable was the treason; but this, she concluded, ought to increase his gratitude to that Almighty Power under whose wings no infernal assaults could reach him, as it gave greater fervency to the *Amen* with which she accompanied her thanksgiving.⁴ However involved or pedantic, there was no such obscurity in this letter as in the former; no dark hints or menaces; and its conciliatory tone was met by James with every friendly and grateful offer of assistance against her enemies. He revealed to her all the

² MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, October 28, 1600. Also, ibid., same to same, October 31, 1600.

³ Ibid., December 30, 1600.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters. Draft copy of her majesty's letter to the King of Scots, sent by his ambassador, Mr Preston, September 14, 1600.

secret intelligence he had received from Spain, and promised his utmost efforts to raise a force of two thousand Highland soldiers, to act as auxiliaries with the English army in Ireland.¹ When this proposal, however, afterwards came before the convention of the three estates, many of the Highlanders and Islesmen sternly refused to bear arms against the Irish; a race to whom they were linked, they said, by common descent and a common language; whilst the Saxons, or English, whose battles they were to fight, had long been the bitter enemies, both of themselves and their Irish ancestors. What impression English gold might have made on these patriotic scruples is not certain; for, before the muster could be made, a signal victory of the deputy, Lord Mountjoy, over the united forces of Tyrone and the Spaniards, rendered all foreign assistance unnecessary.²

The fate of Essex, who now lay a condemned prisoner in the Tower, was a subject of deep interest to James. What negotiations had passed between this unfortunate nobleman and the King of Scots, it is extremely difficult to discover. No letters from Essex to James, or from the king to Essex, have been preserved; at least none have been discovered: and the assertion of Rapin, which has been more or less copied by all succeeding English historians, that James was actually a fellow-conspirator with him in his insane project for the seizure of the queen's person, and that it was a part of their plot to dethrone Elizabeth and crown James, is utterly improbable, and supported by no evidence whatever. That the king, in common with all who knew him best, esteemed and admired Essex, and that Essex had written to James after his return from Ireland, is, however, certain; nor is it at all improbable that the English earl had laboured to estrange the Scottish monarch from Cecil, and to persuade him that the secretary

was an enemy to his claim, and favoured the title of the Infanta. There undoubtedly was a time, as we learn from James's secret instructions to Burlie,³ (whom he despatched in 1601 to the Grand Duke of Tuscany,) when the Scottish king hesitated whether it would be best to secure the aid of the party of Essex or of Cecil in his secret negotiations with England; but the defeat and imprisonment of this unfortunate nobleman convinced him that his case was desperate; and there is an expression in one of James's memoranda, from which we may infer, that to conciliate Elizabeth he had meanly sent her one of Essex's letters to himself.

However this may be, the Scottish king some time before the trial of Essex, had determined to communicate with Elizabeth on some points wherein he found himself aggrieved; and he now, with the view of interceding for his gallant and unfortunate friend, despatched to London two ambassadors, the Earl of Mar, one of his highest and most trusted nobles, and Mr Edward Bruce, abbot of Kinloss, a person of great judgment and experience. They set off towards the middle of February 1601,⁴ with a gallant suite of more than forty persons; and on their arrival at Berwick were received by the governor, Lord Wylloughby, who gathered from them, in the course of their brief intercourse, that the chief object of their mission was to congratulate the English queen on her escape from the treason of Essex, and to remonstrate against the reception and relief of Gowrie's brothers in England.⁵ In their conversations with this nobleman, they appear to have avoided any allusion to the probable fate of Essex; yet that James had directed them to intercede for his friend cannot be doubted. His

³ Hailes' Cecil Correspondence, p. 112.

⁴ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, February 15, 1600-1. Written on the day Nicolson communicated to James the intelligence of the determination to execute Essex. Certain news of his death were brought on 4th March, 1600-1.

⁵ Ibid., B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil, to February 22, 1601, following the Scottish computation; 1600 the English.

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Nicolson to Cecil, July 4, 1602.

² Ibid., January 3, 1601-2. Also, ibid., February 6, 1601-2.

compassion, however, came too late; for Essex was beheaded before the ambassadors reached London. The original instructions for their mission have not been preserved; but a letter of their royal master to Mar and Kinloss, written soon after their arrival, opens up to us much of its secret history. The real purpose for which they went, was to feel the pulse of the English nobility and people on the great subject of the succession; to secure friends; to discover and undermine opponents; to conciliate the queen, and, if possible, procure from her a more distinct recognition of James's title to the throne: above all, to gain Secretary Cecil, who was now at the head of the English government, and on whose friendly disposition James had long believed that everything depended. Many others had been forward in offering their assistance; and to all he prudently gave a cordial reception; but to Cecil alone he looked as the man who had the game in his hand, and whom he described in his letter of instructions as "king there in effect."¹

On the first audience of Mar and Kinloss, however, all seemed likely to miscarry. From the coldness and jealousy of Elizabeth, she appeared to resent some expressions in the king's sealed letter, written wholly in his own hand, and expostulating with her, in very decided terms, against her too easy belief of the unjust imputations so generally circulated against him. He declared that he was impelled by their long friendship and her own example, to unbosom his griefs, and not to suffer any misconstrued thoughts against her actions to take harbour in his heart; for which purpose, having already experienced the mischief which both had suffered from the employment of inferior diplomatic agents, he had now sent one of his highest

nobles, the Earl of Mar, and one of his wisest councillors, the Abbot of Kinloss; both of them men of known and constant affection to the continuance of the amity between the two nations and their sovereigns; and whom he had fully instructed to deal with all "that honest plainness which was the undiscoverable companion of true friendship."²

Their plainness, however, seems to have been rather too much for the temper of Elizabeth, which, at no time very amiable, was now fretted and broken by her increasing infirmities. "Her majesty," said Cecil to Nicolson, "gave the Earl of Mar nothing but negative answers; the matters being of so sour a nature to the queen, who loves neither importunity nor expostulation." When the ambassadors explained the great pecuniary embarrassments of their royal master, and his hopes that, having done so much to assist her against their common enemies, he now expected some return in current coin, she met the proposal with a haughty denial. She would give, she said, no ready money; but, if he continued to deserve it, his pension should be augmented; and in the meantime, it would be well if he, who boasted of his services against the common enemy, would cease all traffic with Spain, and receive less frequent messages from Rome. As to Lady Lennox's lands, which he claimed so confidently, he should not receive a fraction of their rents; his title to them, she thought, was still *in nubibus*; and till he made it out more clearly, the estates were in safe hands. For the other matters, on which they had shewn themselves so importunate, they were of too delicate and important a nature to be suddenly handled; and she wondered, she said, at the boldness and perseverance with which they had pressed upon her, and dared to broach to her council, so forbidding a subject.³ This, of course, alluded to the succession; which, reminding her

¹ Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, by Lord Hailes, p. 12. From a MS. letter, State-paper Office, James Hudson to Cecil, March 7, 1600-1, it appears the ambassadors arrived in London early in March. Their audience seems to have been on the 22d of March. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hudson to Cecil, March 20, 1600-1.

² State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland, James to Elizabeth, wholly in the king's own hand. February 10, 1601.

³ MS. Letter, British Museum, Titus, C. vii. f. 121, Elizabeth to James, May 11, 1601.

of the probability of her near dissolution, proved unpalatable in the extreme; so that the ambassadors wrote to the king in the lowest spirits, and strongly remonstrated with Secretary Cecil on their strange reception. Nothing in the world, they said, in addressing this minister, but their uncomfortable experience, could have persuaded them that his royal mistress would have treated the offers which regarded her own safety, and the welfare of her people, with so little regard; whilst, on the other hand, she gave so ready an ear to the enemies of their master, and the vile slanders which had been circulated against him. They must make bold to tell him, that there was a great difference between vigilancy and credulity; and that it formed no part of wisdom, “*ponere rumores ante salutem.*”¹

It is interesting to attend to the directions which this unpromising state of things drew from the Scottish king. The ambassadors, it would appear, had sought his instructions as to the terms in which they ought to leave the English queen, if she continued in this unpropitious and distant temper. “As to your doubt,” said he, “in what sort to leave there,² it must be according to the answer you receive to the former demands: for if ye be well satisfied therein, then must ye have a sweet and kind parting; but if ye get nothing but a flat and obstinate denial, which I do surely look for, then are ye, in both the parts of your commission, to behave yourself thus:—

“First, ye must be the more careful, since ye come so little speed in your public employment with the queen, to set forward so much the more your *private* negotiation with the country; and if ye see that the people be not in the highest point of discontentment, (whereof I already spake,) then must ye, by your labours with them, make your voyage at least not all utterly unprofitable; which doth

¹ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, D. ii. f. 470, Earl of Mar and Mr Bruce abbot of Kinloss to Secretary Cecil, April 29, 1601.

² To leave there, *i.e.*, in what terms you take your leave.

consist in these points: *First*, to obtain all the certainty ye can of the town of London, that in due time they will favour the right; *Next*, to renew and confirm your acquaintance with the Lieutenant of the Tower; *Thirdly*, to obtain as great a certainty as ye can of the fleet, by the means of Lord Henry Howard’s nephew, and of some seaports; *Fourthly*, to secure the hearts of as many noblemen and knights as ye can get dealing with, and to be resolved what every one of their parts shall be at the great day; *Fifthly*, to foresee anent³ armour for every shire, that against that day my enemies have not the whole commandment of the armour, and my friends only be unarmed; *Sixthly*, that, as ye have written, ye may distribute good seminaries⁴ through every shire, that may never leave working in the harvest until the day of reaping come; and generally to leave all things in such certainty and order, as the enemies be not able, in the meantime, to lay such bars in my way as shall make things remediless, when the time shall come.

“Now, as to the terms ye shall leave in with the queen, in case of theforesaid flat denial, let your behaviour ever be with all honour, respect, and love to her person; but, at your parting, ye shall plainly declare unto her, that she cannot use me so hardly as it shall be able to make me forget any part of that love that I owe to her as to my nearest kinswoman; and that the greatest revenge I shall ever take of her, shall be to pray to God to open her eyes and to let her see how far she is wronged by such base instruments about her, as abuse her ears; and that although I shall never give her occasion of grief in her time, yet the day may come when I shall crave an account at them of their presumption, when there will be no bar betwixt me and them.”⁵

Nothing could be more manly and judicious than this advice to his ambassadors; nothing was more fitted to

³ *i.e.* Regarding.

⁴ Secret agents.
⁵ Hailes’ Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 9.

raise his character in the eyes of the queen herself, than a line of conduct at once affectionate and firm. Nor were his sentiments and instructions less sound with regard to Secretary Cecil, and those other powerful nobles whom he, at this time, suspected of hostility to his claim, and from whom he had expected better things.

"You shall plainly declare," said he, "to Mr Secretary and his followers, that since now, when they are in their kingdom, they will thus mis-know me, when the chance shall turn I shall cast a deaf ear to *their* requests: and whereas now I would have been content to have given them, by your means, a pre-assurance of my favour, if at this time they had pressed to deserve the same; so now they, contemning it, may be assured never hereafter to be heard, but all the queen's hard usage of me to be hereafter craved at their hands."¹

This last menace, however, was wholly unnecessary. Cecil, whose prudence had led him, for some years past, to keep aloof from the King of Scots, and to conciliate the favour of his royal mistress by turning a deaf ear to all proposals from that suspected quarter, was too acute a courtier, and too keenly alive to his own interest, not to discern the exact moment when perseverance in this principle would have been visited with the total ruin of his power. That moment had now arrived. Elizabeth's health was completely shattered; and however earnestly she struggled to conceal the truth from herself, or to assume her usual gaiety before her people, it was but too evident that, after her long and proud walk of glory and strength, her feet were beginning to stumble upon the dark mountain; and that the time could not be very far distant when the silver cord must be loosed, and the golden bowl be broken. With this prospect before him, Cecil opened, with extraordinary caution, and the most solemn injunctions and oaths of concealment,² a ne-

gotiation with Mar and Kinloss; and James, who had hitherto suspected him, not only welcomed the advances, but soon gave him his full confidence, and intrusted everything to his management and address. How all this was effected, what were the steps which led from distrust to reconciliation, and from this to undoubting and almost exclusive confidence, cannot be ascertained; but two facts are certain and full of meaning: the first, that Cecil, as appears by a paper preserved at Hatfield, advanced ten thousand pounds out of his own pocket to James, which was never repaid; the second, that this able diplomatist, from being first minister to Elizabeth, upon the death of his mistress stepped at once, without question or opposition, into the same high office under James.

Meanwhile the Scottish ambassadors profited by this secret influence; and acting under the instructions of one who had the deepest insight into the character of the queen and the state of the country, were able to follow out their instructions with infinitely greater success than on their first arrival. After a residence of three months in England,³ they returned to James in the beginning of June; and although all had not succeeded to the extent of his wishes, the assurances which they brought from Elizabeth were friendly and encouraging. She expressed her astonishment, indeed, that the king should have again pressed upon her the same disagreeable matter, on which she had hoped he was already satisfied. It was a bold thing, she said, for any subject of hers to communicate with the King of Scots on so great a cause, without her privity; and he had done well to address her openly: for he might assure himself that she alone could do him good: all *byways* would turn to dust and smoke. As to his griefs, to which he alluded in his letter, her conscience acquitted her of every action which should give him the slightest annoyance; yet she took

¹ Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, pp. 8, 9, 10.

² Ibid., pp. 190, 191; also, pp. 202, 203.

³ From about February 20th, till June 2d, 1601.

it kindly that he had unbosomed them, and had sent her so "well-chosen a couple" as Mar and Kinloss. Her letter concluded with this warning, embodied in her usual style of mystery and innuendo :—

" Let not shades deceive you, which may take away best substance. . . . An upright demeanour bears ever more poise than all disguised shows of good can do. Remember, that a bird of the air, if no other instrument, to an honest king shall stand instead of many feigned practices to utter aught that may any wise touch him. And so leaving my scribbles, with my best wishes that you scan what works becometh best a king, and what in end will best avail him, [I rest] your loving sister, that longs to see you deal as kindly as I mean."¹

Elizabeth's last parliament met, (October 27th;) and the queen, although utterly unable for the exertion, insisted on opening it in person, and with unusual pomp; but she fainted under the weight of the royal robes, and would have fallen to the ground, if some gentlemen at hand had not caught her in their arms.² The Irish war, and the necessity of a large subsidy to support it, formed the great business for which parliament had assembled; and the queen had determined to avail herself of James's recent offer; to send her a body of Highland auxiliaries from the Isles. Lord Mountjoy, the deputy, was still surrounded by difficulties. He had to hold out, not only against the native Irish, led by O'Neill, but against a force of four thousand Spaniards, who had effected a landing at Kinsale, under Don Juan D'Aguilar. To these dangers threatening England from without, was added the deep discontent of the people at home; who were groaning under that monstrous and

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland. Endorsed, Copy of her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand. See, also, her public letter under the Privy Seal, delivered to the ambassadors on their return, MS., British Museum, Titus, C. vii. fol. 124, dated May 11, 1601.

² Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 26.

oppressive system of monopolies, which had raised the prices of all the necessaries of life to an exorbitant amount. By a monopoly we are to understand a royal patent, which conveyed to some individual the right of exclusively selling any particular commodity; and the power of granting such, the queen claimed, and justly, as a part of her royal prerogative. But she had now carried the practice to a grinding and ruinous extent. The patentee, if he did not exercise the privilege himself, disposed of it to another; and, in either case, all inferior venders, whether in wholesale or retail, were compelled to pay him a high yearly premium, which of course, fell eventually on the consumer. This abuse had gone on increasing since the seventeenth year of the queen's reign; who had found it a convenient way of paying a debt, or satisfying an importunate courtier or creditor, without drawing upon her own privy purse, or risking her popularity by direct taxation.³ It was to the deep and general discontent occasioned by this, that King James had alluded in his secret instructions to Mar and Kinloss, when he advised them to discover whether the impatience and disgust of the country had increased to such a height that they were unwilling to keep on terms any longer with prince or state; in which case, he observed, it would be a pity not to declare himself openly in their favour, or to suffer them to be overthrown for lack of good backing:⁴ a sentence, by the way, which proves that Elizabeth had good ground for her jealousy of the intrigues of the Scottish king with her subjects. But on the arrival of Mar and Kinloss, they soon discovered that the execrations of the people were directed rather against the minister Cecil and the government, than against the queen herself; and when parliament met, and the subject of the Irish war was brought before the Commons, it was soon seen that they knew per-

³ Lingard's History of England, vol. viii. p. 380.

⁴ Hailes' Secret Correspondence, pp. 2, 3.

factly how to make this distinction. The safety of the country and the honour of the queen demanded that they should make every sacrifice to bring the Irish war to a speedy and successful termination; and for this purpose they agreed to one of the largest grants that had been given during this long reign; voting at once four subsidies, and eight tenths and fifteenths, for the expense of the war:¹ but on the odious grievance of monopolies they were firm. Cecil's coach, in going to parliament, had been surrounded by an infuriated mob, which assailed him with curses, and threatened to tear him to pieces. It was time, therefore, to take the alarm; and the queen, who, however obstinate with her ministers, never struggled beyond the proper point with her people, sent for the speaker of the Commons, and declared her resolution to abolish the whole system.² This announcement was received with the utmost joy; the queen regained her popularity; and soon after this, the total defeat of Tyrone and his Spanish auxiliaries, the successful termination of the war in Ireland, and the destruction of the Spanish galleys under Spinola, by a combined squadron of the English and Dutch, shed a farewell ray of glory over the last year of her reign. It was now no longer necessary for Elizabeth to court the assistance of James, or to keep in pay the hardy mercenaries of the Scottish Isles: her kingdom was at peace; and resuming her progresses and her gaieties, she struggled to overcome or defy her increasing infirmities; rode to the chase; had country dances in the privy chamber; selected a new favourite, in the young Earl of Clanricarde; and seemed wholly given up to disport, at a time when it was apparent to every one that her hours had been far better spent in retirement from the world, and preparation for that last scene, which the greatest prince, as well as the meanest subject, must act alone.³

¹ Hailes' Secret Correspondence, p. 25.

² Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 380, 381.

³ Lord Henry Howard to the Earl of Mar,

There had been some expectation in Scotland that the question of the succession was to have been agitated in the late parliament; and the arrival of James's favourite, the Duke of Lennox, at the court of England, at the moment of its being assembled, seems to have excited the suspicions of the queen;⁴ but this nobleman, although certainly sent by the King of Scots, chiefly to watch over his interests and confirm those secret friendships with which he was strengthening himself, acted with much prudence, paid his court effectually to the English queen, and lulled all resentment by his frank offer to lead the Scottish auxiliaries against the Spaniards and the Irish. New and alarming reports of the continued preparations of Philip the Third having recently reached the queen, she was particularly gratified by the secret information which James had transmitted her on the subject, and by the readiness with which he had permitted Lennox to volunteer his services. These, however, she declined; declaring that she would never consent to hazard so valuable a life in so perilous an enterprise, and dismissing him with the most flattering marks of her approbation.⁵

During the duke's residence in England, his chief care seems to have been to conciliate that party in the state which was opposed to Cecil, and whom this crafty minister represented as im-
mical to James. It was led by the Earl of Northumberland, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Lord Cobham. Lord Henry Howard, the agent of Cecil, in his secret correspondence with the King of Scots, laboured to persuade that monarch that this faction were little to be trusted, without weight in the country, and altogether desperate, false, and reckless men. The great object of Cecil and Howard was to exalt their own power and services, and

September 1602, Hailes' Cecil Correspondence, pp. 231, 233.

⁴ Lord Henry Howard to the Earl of Mar, Nov. 22, 1601, Hailes' Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 16.

⁵ M.S., State-paper Office, copy of the time, Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, December 2, 1601.

to deprecate every other instrument, to whom James might deem himself indebted; and never was there a more revolting picture than that presented by the secret correspondence of these two politicians with their future sovereign. To the king himself, Lord Henry's flattery almost borders upon blasphemy.¹ On all others, except Cecil and his confidants, he pours out an unceasing flood of abuse, slander, bitterness and contempt; and to that great princess whom they had idolized in her palmy days, and whose sun was now sinking in sorrow, there is not given a single sigh of regret, not a solitary glance of sympathy. It has been attempted to defend Cecil from being participant in these intrigues, by asserting that the correspondence is not his, and that he is not responsible for the letters of Lord Henry Howard; but the argument will not bear examination. It is true, indeed, that he neither signed or indited the letters; but he dictated them: he read and approved of them; he dispatched them; he was present when the answers were received; he opened the packet which contained them; and King James, when he replies, either in his own person or through Mr Bruce, his late ambassador, addresses Howard as the mere organ of Cecil. To have written in his own person, or to have given Lord Henry Howard any unlimited commission which should have made Cecil responsible for every sentiment uttered by this prince of flatterers, would have been far too bungling and dangerous an expedient for so profound a politician, so accomplished a lover of mystery and intelligence, as this statesman. But every letter in the correspondence shows that a finer system was adopted, which insured

safety to the minister in the event of detection, and yet interfered with none of the advantages of success; by which Howard, although fully instructed beforehand by Cecil, expressed himself as if he acted alone, and at his own risk. It has been said, also, that the real letters of Cecil to James are preserved at Hatfield, amongst the archives of his noble descendant, and contain nothing discreditable to the secretary. But these, probably, were letters of mere ceremony and general good will, which Cecil dispatched by the common opportunities, and cared not who should intercept or read; nay, it is quite possible that, in the intricate spirit of the diplomacy of these times, they were written to be intercepted, and for the purpose of lulling suspicion by the innocence of their contents. At all events, nothing could be more secretly or adroitly managed than the whole correspondence between Howard, Cecil, and the Scottish king. No one had the least suspicion of the secret understanding that existed between the trio. In England, the secretary appeared wholly engrossed with public affairs, and so exclusively devoted to his royal mistress, that many wondered at his indifference to James, whilst he was in truth his sole adviser. When the subject of the succession was openly canvassed; when all were looking to Scotland, and Cecil seemed to stand aloof, and, if the subject were forced upon him, spoke of the King of Scots with a coldness and indifference which blinded the most acute: James, on the other hand, acted his part with admirable dexterity; praised Cecil for his fidelity to his royal mistress; and affected great doubt whether he would eventually turn out his friend or his opponent.

On one point, however, Sir Robert and Lord Henry mistook the character of their royal correspondent. To enhance their own services and destroy their rivals, they insisted on the absolute necessity of the king following out the precise plan which they had sketched out for him, and declining

¹ He is the apple of the Eternal eye: the most "inestimable King James, whom neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, shall separate from the affection and vows they have, next to the sovereign possessor, vowed to him; the redoubted monarch of whose matchless mind Lord Henry thinks, as God's lieutenant on earth, with the same reverence and awe which he owes to God himself when he is on his knees."—Hailes' *Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil*, pp. 154, 168, 170, 194, 233.

all offers of assistance but what came through themselves. Northumberland, Raleigh, Shrewsbury, Cobham, were, according to their representations, utterly unworthy of credit; and were secretly engaged in courses which proved them to be bitterly opposed to his claim. To write to them, or to encourage any persons whatever who were not pointed out by his worthy and faithful Cecil, would, according to Lord Henry's opinion, be the extremity of folly, and might in a moment overthrow all the fair fabric of their hopes. Nay, they had the boldness to proceed farther; and not only attempted to work on the fears and suspicions of the Scottish king, by warning him of his enemies in England, but threw out dark and mysterious hints of treasonable intrigues in his own court, and even presumed to tutor him as to his conduct to his queen. Anne of Denmark, they hinted, was a worthy princess, yet a *woman*, and easily deceived by flatterers, who, for their own ends, were doing all they could to thwart the only measures which could guide him, under the pilotage of his worthy Cecil, to the haven where he would be. James, however, was not to be so cozened. He detected the selfishness of such conduct; called upon them, if they really knew of any plots against his life or his rights, to speak out with the manly openness of truth, and have done with dark innuendoes. Following his own judgment, he treated with contempt their prohibition as to "secret correspondents;" wrote to Northumberland, accepting with warmth and gratitude his offers of service; welcomed with courtesy and good will all who made advances to him; and took care that Lord Henry Howard should know that he considered the language used regarding his queen as a personal insult to himself. The two cunning statesmen, who had outwitted themselves in their desire to monopolize power and destroy their competitors, were astounded; and Lord Henry's apology to his inestimable King James was as abject as his object had been mean and selfish.

James's greatest difficulty was with the Catholics, a powerful party in England; yet regarded by the queen, and the Protestant body of her subjects, with so much suspicion, that it was almost equally dangerous to his hopes to conciliate, or to practise severity. But, happily for this prince, they were at this moment weakened by divisions; and the great question of the "succession," which had been keenly debated amongst the English Catholic exiles abroad, had eventually split them into two parties: the Spanish faction, led by the celebrated Father Persons, the author of the famous Treatise on the Succession, published under the fictitious name of Doleman; and their opponent faction, led by Paget. The first party had espoused the cause of the Infanta. It was to support her claim, as descended from John of Gaunt, son of Edward the Third, that the book on the succession had been written: and as long as this princess continued single, and there was a chance of her marrying the King of Scots, or some English nobleman, it was thought not impossible that the English people might be reconciled to her accession. Her marriage, however, with the Archduke Albert, rendered the prospect desperate; and Persons, her champion, who had now deserted the court of Spain, and removed to Rome, abandoned her cause, and confined his efforts, and those of his party, to the succession of a Catholic prince.¹ Who this should be, he declared, was a matter to him of indifference; but many of his supporters in England looked to Arabella Stewart, the cousin-german of James; and had formed a visionary project for her conversion to Rome, and her marriage with the Cardinal Farnese, also a descendant of John of Gaunt.² It was, perhaps, to this wild scheme that the Scottish king alluded, when he lamented that Arabella had been lately moved, by the persuasion of Jesuits, to change her religion:³

¹ Lingard's History of England, vol. viii. fourth edition, p. 388. Letter of Father Persons to the Earl of Angus, January 4, 1600.

² Ibid. p. 489.

³ Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil, p. 118.

but there is no evidence that Persons, who had much influence with his party in England, ever believed it practicable; and the publication of James's "Basilicon Doron," appears to have given a new turn to the ideas of this devoted Catholic, and to have persuaded him, that a prince who could express himself with so much catholicity on some points, would, in time, "suffer himself to be guided to the truth on all." There is a remarkable letter still preserved, in which Persons, writing from Rome, describes his having read some passages of the "Basilicon" to the Pope, who, he says, could scarcely refrain from shedding tears of joy, in hearing them. "May Christ Jesus," exclaimed Persons, "make him a Catholic! for he would be a mirror to all princes of Christendom."¹

All this rendered the Spanish faction far less bitter than before in their feelings towards the Scottish king; whilst their opponents, the English Catholic exiles, who were led by Paget, having all along contended that Mary Queen of Scots was the rightful heir of the English crown, considered, as a matter of course, that her title vested after her death, in her son. To him, therefore, they professed their readiness, on the death of Elizabeth, to transfer their allegiance: from him they looked, in return, for some alleviation of their sufferings, some toleration of their religion. And so keen were their feelings against the Spanish faction, that at the time Persons advocated the cause of the Infanta, he and his supporters met with no more determined enemies than the English Catholic exiles.² So far did they carry this hostility, that they entered into a secret correspondence with their own government, and lowered themselves by becoming spies and informers against their brethren.³

It was the anxious desire of the King of Scots to conciliate both these

parties. One great argument in Persons' "Conference on the Succession," which contended that heresy must be considered an insurmountable ground of exclusion, was evidently directed against him; and had formerly given rise to a mission of Pourie Ogilvy, a Catholic baron, whom he sent, in 1595, into Italy and Spain. At Venice, and at Rome, this envoy, acting, as he asserted, by the secret instructions of the King of Scots, represented his royal master as ready to be instructed in the Catholic faith, and to give a favourable and candid hearing to its expounders. On proceeding into Spain, Ogilvy's flight was bolder, and the promises held out more tempting and decided. The King of Scots, he said, was determined to revenge the injuries and insults offered him by the Queen of England, and eagerly desired the co-operation of Philip. Why then should their majesties not enter into a treaty? His master, for his part, would become Catholic, establish the true faith in his dominions, and send his son, as a hostage for his sincerity, to be educated at the court of Spain. In return, he required from Philip a renunciation of his claims upon the English crown, an advance of 500,000 ducats, and an auxiliary force of 12,000 men. Philip, however, looked with suspicion on the ambassador, who had been observed to haunt with Paget and his friends in the Low Countries. His veracity, his credentials, even his religion, were disputed; and although treated with outward courtesy by the Spanish monarch, he received little encouragement.

But James, who had a strong predilection for these mysterious missions, was not cast down; and returned to the attack. In September 1596, a second envoy, named Drummond, who alleged that he was employed by James, repaired to the papal court, and carried with him a letter from the king to Clement the Eighth, in which he suggested that the residence of a Scottish minister at the court of Rome would have the best effects; and proposed that Drummond,

¹ MS., British Museum, Julius, F. vi. f. 142. Persons to T. M. from Rome.

² Lingard's History of England, vol. viii. fourth edition, pp. 390, 391.

³ Ibid.

bishop of Vaison, a Scotchman by birth, should be selected for that purpose. The ambassador proposed also, in the king's name, that the young Prince Henry, his eldest son, should be brought up in the Catholic faith, and offered to place his castle of Edinburgh in the hands of the Catholics.¹ It is extremely difficult to discover how much, or how little truth there was in these alleged intrigues of the Scottish king. Ogilvy, undoubtedly, acted not only as an envoy of James, but a spy of Cecil; and James, when challenged by Elizabeth's ambassador, Sir Henry Brunker, as to his letter to Clement, declared, in the most pointed and solemn manner, that he never wrote, or transmitted such a document to Rome. The letter, however, was subsequently produced, and published by Cardinal Bellarmine. It undoubtedly bore the king's signature; and, after a rigid inquiry, Lord Balmerino, the Scottish secretary of State, a Catholic, and near relative of the Bishop of Vaison, confessed that he had smuggled in the obnoxious epistle amongst a crowd of other papers; and that the king, believing it to be a matter of form, like the rest, had signed it without glancing at its contents. This story, however, did not itself obtain belief. It was alleged that Balmerino had consented to become the scape-goat, that he might shelter his royal master; and the leniency of his punishment for so daring an act, confirmed the suspicion. But on whatever side the truth may be, this secret intercourse produced a favourable feeling in the great body of the Catholics towards the king of Scots. The impression in his favour was universal amongst all parties in England; and Howard assured the Earl of Mar, in a letter written in the summer of 1602, that all men spoke as freely and certainly of the succession of the King of Scots, as if they were about to take the oath of allegiance to him in his own capital.²

¹ Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, pp. 157, 158.

² Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil, p. 127.

It remained only for James to take heed that no storms or commotions at home should disturb this fair weather in England. And here, too, his happy star prevailed; and his efforts to extinguish those dreadful dissensions amongst his nobility, which, for many years, had exposed the country to all the horrors of private war, were at last successful. The Earls of Argyle and Huntly were reconciled, and their friendship cemented by the betrothal of Argyle's daughter to Huntly's son.³ The Duke of Lennox, and the party of the Scottish queen, were induced to forget their deadly differences with the Earl of Mar; and, last of all, that obstinate and far-ramifying blood-feud between the great houses of Moray and Huntly, which had now, for more than forty years, torn and depopulated some of the fairest portions of the country, was brought to an end by the firm and judicious arbitration of James. This success, and the extraordinary calm with which it was accompanied, occasioned the utmost joy throughout the country; and Nicolson, the English resident, informed Cecil, that nothing was now heard at court but the voice of festivity and gratulation; the nobility feasting each other, consorting like brethren, and all united in one loving bond for the surety and service of the king.⁴

Amid these happy reconciliations, the King of Spain intimated to James his desire to send him an ambassador; and Drummond, bishop of Vaison, solicited permission to visit his native country. The King of France, also, in great secrecy, proposed a new league with Scotland, with the object of strengthening himself against Spain; but as Henry added nothing as to including England, the Scottish king seized the opportunity to convince Elizabeth of his fair dealing. He accordingly dispatched Roger Ashton with a full account of all his foreign negotiations; made her participant of his secret intelligence from Spain;

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Nicolson to Cecil, February 1, 1602.

⁴ Ibid.

communicated the private offers of Henry the Fourth; and expressing his deep gratitude for her steady friendship, requested her advice regarding the answers he should send to France and Spain.¹ The queen, in reply, cautioned him against putting implicit trust in the promises of the French king, whose sincerity she doubted. "Let others promise," said she, "and I will do as much with truth as others with wiles." However, it would do little harm, she observed, to put Henry to the test; and for her part she would make one of any league that was proposed. As to secrecy and taciturnity, he might thoroughly depend upon her; her head might fail, but her tongue never.² It was on this proposal of Philip, which came somewhat suspiciously about the same time as the Bishop of Vaison's offered visit, that Elizabeth addressed, in the beginning of January 1602-3, her last confidential letter to James. It was written entirely with her own hand, now so tremulous from age as to make the characters almost illegible; but there was nothing of weakness or irresolution in the sentiments. It is here given entire, dated the 5th January 1603, eleven weeks before her death; which makes it probable that it was amongst the last letters of importance she ever wrote:—

"MY VERY GOOD BROTHER,—It pleaseth me not a little that my true intents, without glosses or guiles, are by you so gratefully taken; for I am nothing of the vile disposition of such as, while their neighbours' houses is, or likely to be, a-fire, will not only not help, but not afford them water to quench the same. If any such you have heard of towards me, God grant he remember it not too well for them! For the archduke—alas! poor man, he mistaketh everybody like himself, (except his bonds;) which, without his brother's help, he will soon repent.

"I suppose, considering whose apert³

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, July 4, 1602.

² Elizabeth to James, Royal Letters, State-paper Office, July 4, 1602.

³ Apert: open.

enemy the King of Spain is, you will not neglect your own honour so much to the world (though you had no particular love to me) as to permit his ambassador in your land, that so causelessly prosecutes such a princess as never harmed him; yea, such a one as (if his deceased father had been rightly informed) did better merit at his hands than any prince on earth ever did to other. For where hath there been an example that any one king hath ever denied so fair a present, as the whole seventeen provinces of the Low Countries? yea, who not only would not have denied them, but sent a dozen gentlemen to warn him of their sliding from him, with offer of keeping them from the near neighbours' hands, and sent treasure to stay the shaking towns from lapse.—Deserved I such a recompence as many a complot both for my life and kingdom? Ought not I to defend and bereave him of such weapons as might invade myself? He will say, I help Holland and Zealand from his hands. No. If either his father or himself would observe such oath, as the Emperor Charles obliged himself, and so in sequel his son,—I would not [have] dealt with others' territories; but they hold these by such covenants, as not observing, by their own grants they are no longer bound unto them. But though all this were not unknown to me, yet I cast such right reasons over my shoulder, and regarded their good, and have never defended them in a wicked quarrel; and, had he not mixed that government, contrary to his own law, with the rule of Spaniards, all this had not needed.

"Now for the warning the French gave you of Veson's embassage. To you, methinks, the king (your good brother) hath given you a *caveat*, that being a king he supposes by that measure you would deny such offers. And since you will have my counsel, I can hardly believe that (being warned) your own subject shall be suffered to come into your realm, from such a place to such intent. Such a prelate (if he came) should be taught a better lesson than play so presumpt-

tuous and bold a part, afore he know your good liking thereof, which I hope is far from your intent : so will his coming verify to much good Mr Symple's asseverations at Rome, of which you have or [ere] now been warned enough.

"Thus you see how to fulfil your trust reposed in me, which to infringe I never mind. I have sincerely made patent my sincerity; and though not fraught with much wisdom, yet stuffed with great good will. I hope you will bear with my molesting you too long with my *scrattinge* hand, as proceeding from a heart that shall be ever filled with the sure affection of

"Your loving and friendly sister."¹

Nothing, certainly, could be more friendly than this advice; and James, who was convinced that everything was now prepared for his pacific succession, and that he had no longer anything to dread, either from aspirants abroad or intrigue and conspiracy at home, waited quietly for the event which should put him in possession of his hopes. Nor had he long to wait. Only ten days after her last letter, Elizabeth caught a severe cold at Whitehall; and as she had been warned by Dr Dee, her astrologer, to beware of that palace, she exposed herself to a removal to Richmond in stormy weather, and after a slight amendment became worse. Up to this time she had struggled sternly and strongly against every symptom of increasing weakness. It had long been evident to all about her, that, since the death of Essex, her mind and constitution had been perceptibly shattered. Her temper was entirely broken; and, in spite of every effort to defy it, a deep melancholy, and weariness of life, had fixed upon her. But although this was apparent to near observers,² to the world she kept up appearances; and continued her usual fêtes and diversions, interrupted by

¹ MS. Letters, State-paper Office, Royal Letters, Scotland. Endorsed, January 5, copy of Her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand. It is now printed for the first time.

² Letter of Sir John Harrington, quoted in Dr Lingard's History, vol. viii. p. 394.

sudden fits of silence, abstraction, and tears.³ At last the effort was too much; the bow, bent to its utmost endurance, snapt asunder; and her lion heart, and strong energetic frame, sunk at once into a state of the most pitiable and helpless weakness. Every effort to rouse her was ineffectual. She would take neither medicines nor nourishment; her sleep entirely forsook her, and a low hectic fever seemed to be wasting her by inches; whilst she complained of a heavy load upon the heart, which made her sigh almost incessantly, and seek, in vain, for relief in a restless change of position. These sad symptoms increased to such a degree in the beginning of March, that the physicians pronounced her case hopeless; and it was deemed right to send for the council, who arrived at Richmond on the 18th of March; and anticipating her speedy dissolution, took such measures as were thought necessary, in that event, to secure the public tranquillity. With this object, it was resolved, that the lord high-admiral, Howard earl of Nottingham, the only member of the council whose presence seemed to give comfort to the dying queen, Cecil, the secretary of state, and the lord keeper, should remain at Richmond; whilst the rest of the council repaired to Whitehall. Orders, at the same time, were issued to set a guard upon the Exchequer; to arrest and transport to Holland all suspicious characters found lurking in London and Westminster; to furnish the court with means of defence; and convey to the Tower some gentlemen who were believed to be desperate from discontent, and anxious for innovation. Most of these whose hands it was thus thought wise to manacle, before they could use them in any sudden mischief, were partisans of Essex; and it is remarkable, that in this number we find Baynham, Catesby, and Tresham, afterwards involved in the Gunpowder Treason.

Whilst these precautions were being taken, the melancholy object of them, the queen, seemed retired and sunk

³ Birch's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 505. Harrington's Nugæ Antiquæ, pp. 317, 318.

within herself; took no interest in anything that was going on; and if roused for a moment, declared that she felt no pain, required no remedies, and was anxious for death. She expressed, however, a strong desire to hear prayers in her private chapel, and all was made ready; but she found the effort too much for her, and had cushions spread at the door of the privy chamber, where she lay and heard service. Want of food and sleep appear, not long after, to have brought on a partial delirium; for she now obstinately insisted on sitting up, dressed day and night, upon her cushions; and when entreated by the lord admiral to go to bed, assured him, with a shudder of terror, that if he had seen what she saw there, he would choose any place but that. She then motioned him to approach her; and ordering the rest to leave the room, drew him with a piteous gesture down to her low seat, and exclaimed, "My lord, they have bound me: I am tied with an iron collar about my neck."¹ It was in vain he attempted either argument or consolation: no power would make her undress or go to bed; and in this miserable state she sat for two days and three nights, her finger pressed upon her lips, as if afraid of betraying some secret; her eyes open and fixed on the ground, and generally silent and immovable.² Yet, when Cecil her secretary remonstrated against this, and asked if she had seen spirits, she smiled contemptuously, and said the question was not worthy an answer; but when he told her she must go to bed, if it were but to satisfy her people, she showed a flash of her former spirit. "Must!" said she; "is must a word to be addressed to princes? Ah, little man, little man! thy father, had he been alive, durst not have used that word; but thou art presumptuous, because thou knowest I shall die." To the same minister she repeatedly declared that she was not mad, and that

he must not think to make Queen Joan of her: alluding, perhaps, to Joanna the deranged Queen of Naples.³

It was now thought right to summon the ministers of religion; upon which the aged Whitgift, archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London her almoner, immediately repaired to Richmond; and being admitted to her sick chamber, appeared to give her comfort by their ministrations and prayers. They attempted to induce her to take some nourishment, and to follow the prescriptions of her physicians; but this she steadily refused, declaring that she had no wish to live. They then exhorted her to provide for her spiritual safety: to which she mildly answered, "That I have done long ago."⁴ When the archbishop, who was affected by the deep despondency and melancholy into which she had sunk, attempted to rouse and comfort her by alluding to the services she had conferred on Europe, and by her glorious defence of the Protestant faith, she checked him severely, declaring that she had too long listened to the voice of flattery, and that it should at least be silent on her death-bed; but she held him by the hand, and compelled him to continue his prayers, till the aged primate's knees were wearied, and he had almost sunk down at her bedside. At last she permitted him to depart, after receiving his blessing. In these devotions she did not join audibly, for her speech had almost entirely left her for two days before her death; but it was apparent to those around her that she was perfectly sensible; and they had the comfort of seeing her lift her eyes to heaven, and join her trembling emaciated hands in the attitude of prayer.⁵

To the latest moment of her life she seemed willing to keep up the mystery as to her successor, and

¹ MS. of Lady Southwell, quoted by Dr Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397.

² Sloan MSS., printed by Ellis, second series, vol. iii. p. 194.

³ Carey's Memoirs, pp. 120, 122. It is remarkable that no proposal to receive the blessed communion was made by the dying queen or the bishops.

¹ Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397. Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 653. Carey's Memoirs, p. 117.

² Turner's History of Elizabeth, pp. 700, 701. Birch's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 507.

either evaded the question, or replied so obscurely, that it was difficult to divine her wishes. On the night, however, on which she died, Cecil made a last effort for the King of Scots; and accompanied by the Lord-admiral Howard, and the lord keeper, earnestly requested her to name a successor. Her answer was proud and brief: "My seat has been the seat of kings, and none but a king must succeed me." They urged her to be more explicit, and mentioned the King of France; but she was silent. They then ventured on the King of Scots; but she vouchsafed no sign. The Lord Beauchamp, the heir of the house of Suffolk by his mother Lady Catherine Grey, was then spoken of; upon which she roused herself and said, with a look and flash of her former lion spirit, "I will have no rascal's son in my seat."¹ Here, according to the account of Lady Southwell, one of her maids of honour, who stood at the moment beside the bed, the important interview ended; and the queen never again spoke. But on the other hand, it was positively affirmed by Cecil, and the two lords his companions, that at a later hour of the same night she clearly declared by signs that the King of Scots alone ought to succeed her. When his name was mentioned, it is said she suddenly started, heaved herself up in the bed, and held her hands jointly over her head in manner of a crown. It is probable that this sign, given by the dying princess, was one of assent; yet, it is possible, also, that they who had seized the awful moment when her soul was hovering between the two worlds to torture her with questions, may have mistaken a movement of agony for one of approbation.²

Soon after this she sunk into a state of insensibility, and about midnight fell into a placid sleep, from which she woke to expire gently and without a struggle. Cecil and the lords at Richmond, instantly posted to Lon-

don; at six in the morning the council assembled; and on that same morning, before ten o'clock, King James the Sixth was proclaimed heir and successor to Elizabeth, both by proximity of blood, and, as it was now positively added, by her own appointment upon her death-bed. Sir Robert Carey, Lord Hunsdon's youngest son, a near relative and favourite of the queen, was at Richmond during her few last miserable days of suffering; and Lady Scrope, his sister, one of her ladies, watched her royal mistress at the moment of her death. Both were friends and correspondents of the King of Scots, and it had been concerted between the brother and sister that the distinction of being the first to announce the happy news to that monarch should be theirs. It was difficult, however, to cheat the vigilancy of Cecil and the council, who had ordered all the gates of the palace to be closed; but Carey was on the alert, ready booted and spurred; his sister stood beside the bed, watching for her mistress' last sigh; and the moment it was breathed, she snatched a ring from her finger, (it had been a gift from the King of Scots,) glided out of the chamber, and cast it over the palace window to her brother, who threw himself on horseback, and rode post into Scotland. The queen had died at three o'clock on Thursday morning, and Carey reached the palace of Holyrood on Saturday night, after the royal expectant had retired to bed. He was immediately admitted; and throwing himself on his knees, saluted James as monarch of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland. The king asked for the token; and Carey, drawing the ring from his bosom, presented it in his sister's name. James then gave him his hand to kiss; and without evincing any unseemly exultation, bade the messenger good night, and composed himself to rest. Next morning, and for the two succeeding days, the news was not made public, as Carey's message was not official; but on the third day, Sir Charles Percy, brother to the Earl of Northumberland, and Thomas Somerset, son of Lord Wor-

¹ MS. by Lady Southwell, Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397.

² Sloane MSS., printed by Ellis, second series, vol. iii. p. 194.

cester, arrived with a letter from the privy council of England, announcing the death of the queen, the proclamation of James's accession to the throne, and the universal joy and impatience with which the people of England expected their new monarch. It assured him that their sorrow for their recent loss was extinguished by looking forward to the heroic virtues which resided in his person, laid at his feet the humble offering of their faith and obedience, and besought him, in his excellent wisdom, to visit them with all speed, that he might take possession of his inheritance, and inspire new life into its languishing body.¹

This great event was now communicated to the people, who received it at first with universal demonstrations of exultation and delight; and the king declared his determination to set out speedily for his new kingdom, leaving the queen and his children to follow at a slower pace. He committed the government of Scotland to the privy-council; intrusted his eldest son, Henry, now Prince of Wales, to the Earl of Mar; Prince Charles to Sir Alexander Seton president of the Session; and the Princess Elizabeth to the Earl of Linlithgow. On the succeeding Sunday, James attended service in the High Church of St. Giles, where a sermon was preached, in which the minister enumerated the many mercies poured out upon their prince; and described, as none of the least, his peaceable accession to that mighty kingdom which now awaited him. The monarch himself then rose and delivered a valedictory address to the congregation, which, we are told, was often interrupted by the tears of the people. James, who was himself moved by these expressions of regret and affection, entreated his subjects not to be too deeply troubled at his departure; assured them that they should find the fruits of his government as well afar off as when he had resided amongst them; pleaded that his increase in greatness did in nowise diminish his love; and promised them

a personal visit once every three years; when the meanest as well as the greatest, should have access to his person, and permission to pour their complaints into his bosom.²

This farewell oration was delivered on the 3d of April 1603. On the 5th of the same month the king, surrounded by a large and brilliant cavalcade, composed not only of Scottish but of English noblemen and gentlemen, who had hurried to his court with the proffers of their homage, took his departure from Edinburgh amid the lamentations of the citizens. His progress through England, which occupied a month, was one long and brilliant pageant. Triumphs, speeches, masques, huntings, revels, gifts, all that wealth could command, and flattery and fancy devise, awaited him at the different cities and castles, which he visited; and on the 6th of May, 1603, he entered London, accompanied by a numerous concourse of his nobility and councillors, guarded and ushered by the Lord Mayor and five hundred citizens on horseback, and welcomed by the deafening shouts of an immense multitude of his new subjects. It seemed as if the English people had in this brief period utterly forgotten the mighty princess, whose reign had been so glorious, and over whose bier they had so lately sorrowed. Not a murmur was heard, not one dissenting voice was raised to break the unanimity of his welcome; and thus, after so many centuries of war and disaster, the proud sceptre of the Tudors was transferred to the house of Stewart, with a tranquillity and universal contentment, which, even considering the justice of the title, was remarkable and unexpected.

In this memorable consummation, it was perhaps not unallowable, certainly it was not unnatural, that the lesser kingdom, which now gave a monarch to the greater, should feel some emotions of national pride; for Scotland had defended her liberty against innumerable assaults; had been reduced, in the long struggle, to the very verge of despair; had been betrayed by

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 473, 474.

² Calderwood, p. 472. Spottiswood, p. 476.

more than one of her kings, and by multitudes of her nobles; had been weakened by internal faction, distracted by fanatic rage; but had never been overcome, because never deserted by a brave, though rude and simple people. Looking back to her still remoter annals, it could be said, with perfect historical truth, that this small kingdom had successfully resisted the Roman arms, and the terrible invasions of the Danish sea kings; had maintained her freedom, within her mountains, during the ages of the Saxon Heptarchy, and stemmed the tide of Norman conquest; had shaken off the chains attempted to be fixed upon her by the two great Plantagenets, the First and Third Edwards, and, at a later period, by the tyranny of the Tudors; and if now destined, in the legitimate course of royal succession, to lose her station as a separate and independent kingdom, she yielded neither to hostile force nor to fraud, but willingly consented to link her future destinies with those of her mighty neighbour: like a bride, who, in the dawning prospect of a happy union, is contented to resign, but not to forget, the house and name of her fathers. Yet, however pleased at this pacific termination of their long struggles, the feelings with which his ancient people beheld the departure of their prince were of a melancholy nature; and an event occurred on the same day on which he set out, that made a deep impression upon a nation naturally thoughtful and superstitious.

As the monarch passed the house of Seton, near Musselburgh, he was met by the funeral of Lord Seton, a nobleman of high rank; which, with its solemn movement and sable trappings, occupied the road, and contrasted strangely and gloomily with the bril-

liant pageantry of the royal cavalcade. The Setons were one of the oldest and proudest families of Scotland; and that lord whose mortal remains now passed by had been a faithful adherent of the king's mother, whose banner he had never deserted, and in whose cause he had suffered exile and proscription. The meeting was thought ominous by the people. It appeared, to their excited imaginations, as if the moment had arrived when the aristocracy of Scotland was about to merge in that of Great Britain; as if the Scottish nobles had finished their career of national glory, and this last representative of their race had been arrested on his road to the grave, to bid farewell to the last of Scotland's kings. As the mourners moved slowly onward, the monarch himself participating in these melancholy feelings, sat down by the way-side, on a stone still pointed out to the historical pilgrim; nor did he resume his progress till the gloomy procession had completely disappeared.¹

It is with feelings of gratitude, mingled with regret, that the Author now closes this work—the history of his country—the labour of little less than eighteen years: gratitude to the Giver of all Good, that life and health have been spared to complete, however imperfectly, an arduous undertaking; regret that the tranquil pleasures of historical investigation, the happy hours devoted to the pursuit of truth, are at an end, and that he must at last bid farewell to an old and dear companion.

¹ History of the House of Seyton, Bannatyne Club edition, p. 60. History of Scotland, by Sir Walter Scott, vol. ii. p. 426.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM

MANUSCRIPTS, CHIEFLY IN HER MAJESTY'S STATE-PAPER
OFFICE, HITHERTO UNPRINTED.

No. I., page 15.

Attack on Stirling, April 26, 1578.

A MINUTE and interesting account of the successful attack on Stirling castle, which led to the restoration of Morton to the supreme power in the government, will be found in the following letter from Sir Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley :—

BOWES TO BURGHLEY.¹

"Edinburgh, April 28, 1578.

" May it please your lordship,—On Saturday last, about six in the morning, the Earl of Mar, accompanied with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, and their servants, ordinarily lodged in the castle of Stirling, came to the castle gate, with pretence to go a-hunting; and finding there the Master and his servants, the abbots called the Master aside, charging him that he had much abused the Earl of Mar, his nephew, and far overseen himself in withholding the custody of the king and castle from the earl. The Master, after reasonable excuse made, found that they pressed to possess the keys, and command the piece; and reaching himself to an halbert, his servants came to assist him. Dryburgh and some with him stayed the Master; Cambuskenneth and his complices assaulted the rest; when Buchanan, one of the Master's men, was sore hurt. After the fray pacified, the Master and the abbots withdraw themselves to the hall to debate the matter; and Argyle being then a-bed, rose speedily, and came

with a small number to the hall, where, hearing that the Master and the abbots were in quiet communication, he retired himself to his chamber, and, arming himself, he assembled his servants, that with the Master were able to have overmatched the other. But the Master being then fully satisfied, Argyle was likewise soon after appeased; and then yielding possession for the earl, they agreed at length to remove thence, and draw to concord, specially to satisfy the king, who of the tumult, as is reported, was in great fear, and teared his hair, saying the Master was slain. And as I am informed his grace by night hath been by this means so discouraged, as in his sleep he is herewith greatly disquieted. After all this was ended, the Earls of Argyle and Mar, the two abbots and Mr Buchanan,² advertised by their letters this council of this accident; declaring that the parties were well reconciled; and persuaded the council to proceed forwards in the course determined for the government, as no such matter had happened. Argyle departed out of the castle, and he is now gone to levy his forces, meaning to return within two days at the farthest.

" In this uproar, the eldest son of the Master was so crushed in the throng, as he died the next day. The Master is fallen into vehement disease with danger of his life.

" Upon the coming of the said letters from Stirling, on Saturday about nine in the afternoon, the council assembled; and after some hot humours digested, they despatched Montrose that night

¹ Orig., British Museum, Caligula, C. v.
fol. 89.

² This was the celebrated Buchanan.

towards Stirling, to understand, and certify to them the true state of the matter, to persuade quietness about the king's person, and to continue this present government established until the next parliament.

"Montrose, after long abode at the Lord of Livingston's house, came to Stirling in the next day, and was received into the castle. He putteth the council in good hope that the matter is well pacified, and that this government shall not by this accident be impeached. Whereupon the most part of this council, pretending to have the king's letters commanding their repair to him, are departed this day towards Stirling; but what shall ensue hereof is greatly doubted.

"Lochleven being speedily advertised of the doings of the abbots, came the same day to Stirling, and with some difficulty (as outwardly was shewed) was let into the castle with one servant, whom presently he returned to Lochleven to the Earl of Morton, and himself remaineth still in the castle. The Earl of Morton, upon the first advertisement, came to Lochleven; despatched his servant to the Earl of Angus, to put all his friends and forces in a readiness on an hour's warning. And many noblemen, being friends to these two earls, have done the like; nevertheless they shew no force nor assembly as yet.

"The Lords of the Council have likewise levied all their powers, drawing some part with all possible speed towards Stirling, and leaving the residue in readiness upon warning.

"Some are of opinion that the council will be readily received and welcomed to the king, and to all the castle, without further change; and many think that, by the means of the abbots, the king shall cause them to retire to their own houses, till his pleasure be further known; and in case they disobey the same, then to lay siege and take the castle. That then the king will cause the Earl of Morton and other nobles to levy their power within the realm, to raise the siege, and rescue his person from their violence. What storm shall fall out of these swelling heats doth not yet appear. But I think, verily, and that within two or three days, that it will burst into some open matter, discovering sufficiently the purposes intended; wherein, to my power, I shall seek to quench all violent

rages, and persuade unity and concord among them; which, if this sudden chance had not happened, might easily have taken place. Thus referring the rest to the next occasion,

"And with humble duty, &c.,

"ROBERT BOWES."

No. II., page 17.

Composition between Morton and his Enemies.

Lord Hunsdon's letter from Berwick to Lord Burghley, referred to in the text, and preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, gives some interesting particulars of the composition between Morton and his powerful opponents. It is as follows:—

HUNSDON TO BURGHLEY.

"Berwick, August 19, 1578.

"My very good Lord,—I will not trouble your lordship with any long discourse touching this matter in Scotland."

Hunsdon then refers Burghley to Mr Bowes's letter, "who," he says, "has the greatest merit in bringing about peace: otherwise there had been such a slaughter as would not have been ap-peased in Scotland these many years,—the malice of the lords and their adherents, especially the wardens of Tevidale and the Merse, and their bands, which was their greatest force against Morton, was so great and so desirous of revenge. They of the Merse made them a standard of blue saracenet, and in it a child painted within a grate, with this speech out of his mouth, 'Liberty I crave, and cannot it have.' They seemed to answer under it, 'Either you shall have it, or we will die for it;' so as, though their malice to Morton was their quarrel indeed, yet they made the daintaining of the king their colour.

"My Lord, the queen's maj: hath now both sides at her devotion, and the party of Athole and Argyle more in show than the king's; for the king's side terms the others Englishmen, because they were contented to put the whole of their causes to her majesty; which the other lords, being required of Mr Bowes to do the like, Morton utterly refused the same, saying that the K. and his council would end them. But if Mr Bowes's travel, and some other means, had not taken place, it was very like that Morton had been hard bested; for although the king's side were some-

thing more in number, yet were the others better chosen men, far better horsed and armed, and besides, few of them but, either for their own causes or their friends, bare Morton a deadly hatred and sour desire of revenge, which was but in few of the king's side against any of the other lords. I pray God her majesty do so deal now, having both sides at her devotion, as she may keep them both; which surely she may easily do if she will.

"The king hath sent her majesty a cast of Falcons. I would be glad that her majesty would remember him with some token.

"Thus have I troubled, &c., &c., &c.
"F. HUNSDON."

No. III., page 21.

Destruction of the House of Hamilton by Morton in 1579.

The following letter of Captain Nicholas Arrington to Lord Burghley describes his negotiations with the young king, and the deep feeling of hatred and revenge which animated so many of the nobility against the house of Hamilton. It is preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130:—

NICHOLAS ARRINGTON TO BURGHLEY.

"Berwick, 10th October 1579.

"Right Honourable,—Having given my attendance, as well at Stirling as at Edinburgh, these twenty-six days, for answer of the king to such letters and instructions as I had to deliver and deal in from the queen's highness my sovereign with the king there; and having used my duty and diligence there to my simple knowledge, as well to the king himself as to the whole board and nobility, . . . I have now received the king's letters in answer, which I send herewith to your honour, as also a letter to her highness from the Earl of Morton, &c. Yet, in using such conference with his grace, as her majesty's letters and instructions did lead me unto, touching the Hamiltons, I could not find in the king other than fervent hatred against them, and as it were a fear he had of them, if they should remain or inhabit within that realm, to be dangerous to his person. I found the like devotion of the whole nobility there towards them, and not willing to pity their cause; and thought not only dis-courtesy in receiving them in England,

but as much in soliciting their causes, being so odious murderers to the king's dearest friends; yet seeming to be grateful of her majesty's good [will] in fore-warning the danger that might happen to the king's estate by their banishment into foreign countries, being of so great a house and quality. . . Touching the present state of that country, the king hath not been directly moved by the council, or any number of councillors or noblemen together, for any marriage with any particular person. Yet it is thought that, as there be several factions in that matter, so every one of them seeketh to persuade the K. to marry in that place that may be best for their own purpose; wherein some look for France, some for Spain, some for Denmark; and it is said the matter will be offered to the queen shortly, with request to dispose himself such way as shall be found most convenient for his marriage; and it seems that the K., of his own inclination, best liketh and affecteth to match with England in marriage, in case he may find her majesty favourable to him.

"Touching Monsieur de Aubigny, it appeareth that the king is much delighted with his company, and he is like to win to special favour; and not only to be Earl of Lennox in reversion, (after the earl present,) but also to have some part of the Hamiltons' lands, if he may be drawn to religion. He hath not, as yet, dealt in any matter of marriage with the king, nor in any matter of great weight, but defers all those things to further time. He means to abide in Scotland this winter. His wife is looked for there, with her younger brother Andracks. He lives in court more than his living will bear, as is thought; whereupon some judges he is borne with some greater than himself. He hath many followers, as Mr Henry Kerr and others, that are much suspected; which they perceive, causing them to be more wary to meddle in anything as yet.

"This parliament holds at Edinburgh the 20th of this month, which is thought chiefly for these causes: for the forfeiture of the Hamiltons and Sir James Balfour; for the confirmation of all things done in the regents' times during the king's minority; and for order to be done in the king's house and revenues. The heartburn and hatred betwixt the Earl of Morton and the Kerrs and the Humes, who depend upon Ar-

gyle, Montrose, and that fellowship, still continueth.

"The king is generally well loved and obeyed of both sides, and of all the people. Thus craving pardon for my evil scribbling, using more another weapon than the pen, I do commit your honour to the preservation of the Almighty."

"NICHOLAS ARRINGTON."

No. IV., page 21.

Poisoning of the Earl of Athole, and State of Parties in Scotland.

The two following letters, which are printed from the originals in the Bowes Papers, relate to the state of the country immediately after the death of the Earl of Athole:—

LETTER FROM AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT TO SIR GEORGE BOWES.
Dated 29th April 1579.¹

"The Spirit of the Lord Jesus be with you for salutation.

"I wrote to you before, the day and date of the Earl of Athole deid,² quhilk³ was the 24th of this instant April.

"He was opened and bowelled on Sunday, and it is plainly said he was poisoned, for so they perceive when he was opened. The Earl of Montrose and the Bailie of Arrol is left chief councillors to the Earl of Athole's son, quhilk is eighteen years old.

"His father has given him in command to keep friendship with all them that he was in friendship withal before.

"There is great strife and debate quhilk should be chancellor; but the Earl of Argyle has gotten the grant of it at the king.

"Morton is at Castle Semple with Boyd, and has ane enterprise upon the Hamiltons, at least seems so; but all is falsett⁴ he means.

"To this effect, Captain Crawford is to take up ane hundred men, and Captain Hume ane other hundred; but I think my Lord of Athole's deid shall make them run a new course.

"Ye shall surely know that Athole's fellowship will not leave the common cause; and, therefore, I think ye shall hear of some alteration shortly.

"Our name and the Kerrs is lying at wait what shall be enterprised. I wrote

to you before we shall never be Morton's.

"It is thought that Argyle shall take Athole's place plain upon him, and begin where he left; and Montrose will be a spur to the same.

"We are surely informed that the King of Denmark has levied six thousand men to come on Orkney and Shetland: by whose means this is done I wrote to you before in my last letter.

"The Earl of Angus remains at Tantallon.

"The court is very quiet at this time. I pray God preserve our king, for he is in great hazard: for if they begin the Italian fashion in the king's house, what good shall we look for as long as he is there? Surely, I fear me, if he be not gotten out of their hands, they will like with him. As I hear farther, you shall be advertised.

"Written the 29th April 1579.

"Your loving friend,
"40."

LETTER OF INTELLIGENCE FROM AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT TO SIR GEORGE BOWES.

"Sir,—Albeit the time hath been short since your departure, the accidents and mutations in this realm hath not been of small importance. As I wrote to you of before, that the Earl of Athole his sickness was thought to be mortal, so is he now departed this present life, at Kincardine, the 25th of April, not without great suspicion, and a crying out that he was poisoned. And yet I think, with time, that bruit will vanish, notwithstanding that the Lord of Aratully,⁵ whose name is Stewart, was, by the Earl of Montrose, and the remanent friends that was present when the corpse was opened, sent to the king's majesty, humbly requiring for trial and punishment. To whom his majesty answered,—Gif⁶ that matter were true, it concerned himself for divers respects; and yet, as it were a shame to him to leave the matter untried, and gif need required unpunished,—so were it ane sin to slander any innocent personage: and therefore he would not fail, first to take trial, and thereafter to proceed to punishment.

"The hail⁷ friends of the dead are convened at Dunkelden on the 3d of May, where the young Earls of Athole and Montrose put in deliberation what

¹ From the Bowes MSS., orig.

² Death.

³ Quhilk—which, or who.

⁴ Falsett, falsehood.

⁵ Grandtully

⁶ If.

⁷ Whole.

were best way to come by ane revenge of this heinous fact.

" It hath been concluded with that assembly, that not only those which were present should crave justice of this matter at the king's majesty, but also all the sociats of the Falkirk should be convened to crave the same. Upon this conclusion, a convention of the foresaid is appointed to be at Edinburgh upon the 15th May; but I am of opinion that this their appointed diet shall not hold, in respect of the causes subsequent.

" Upon the 1st May, a matter, before concluded, was put in execution. Letters was directed by the king and council to charge the Lords of Arbroath and Paisley to exhibit their brother, the Earl of Arran, before the king in Stirling, upon the 20th of the said month; which letters was only devised to put the said lords in hope that no further shall proceed against them but by the order aforesaid.

" The Earl of Morton before that time was sent to Dalkeith, the Earl of Angus to Douglas, the Earl of Lennox to Glasgow, the Lord Ruthven to Stirling; all these persons having their forces privately warned upon the 3d of May, marched towards Hamilton and Drafnage, where they made their rendezvous before their setting forward. The twae brether¹ was fled away, and left the house garnished; which are now enclosed, and ready to be given up.

" Immediately after the said lords was upon the fields to press towards Hamilton, when they were certain that no intelligence could prevent their doings, proclamation was sent forth by the king and council, at an hour proclaimed in divers sheriffdoms, to follow the same lords for prosecuting and apprehending of the two foresaid brethren and their complices.

" This sudden and unexpected dealing and proceeding is like to put such affray in the minds of the associates at Falkirk, that their appointed diet for meeting at Edinburgh shall turn to great uncertainty.

" Besides this, the Lord Seton is charged to appear personally at Stirling, upon the 6th day hereof, to answer *super inquirendis*; where he is, for divers respects, to be committed to ward.

" John Seton, second son to the said lord, arrived in this country upon the 2d of May. He is created *Cavallero de Buca* of the Catholic King of Spain. But I believe this commission shall be

: The two brothers.

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of the less efficacy, that his father is now by chance happened in the midst of these troubles. . . . By fame nobody is charged with this heinous fact of poison but the Lady Mar, and her brother the comptroller, quhilk² is thought shall be after trial evanished; because divers does believe, that this bruit hath rather proceeded upon malice to found ane quarrel upon, nor upon any sure ground. Ye may, by yourself, consider that all these matters tend to this fine,³ to bring the king to Edinburgh out of fear. . . . The rulers of his affairs and person are looked for to be these: the Earls Morton, Buchan, Argyle, gif⁴ he will leave the associates, and Montrose in like manner, and the Lord Ruthven. It is thought that ω , at the king's desire, shall be⁵ accept upon him the office of chancellor; and failing of that, it is in question betwixt Argyle and Buchan, of thir twae⁶ whay shall be thought meetest by the king and council.

" I write only unto you *nudam et veram historiam*, leaving to your own judgment to discourse what shall follow; whilk is able enough to do, in respect that all the affairs of this country is better to you known nor by writing can be explained.

" I have had large conference with ω ,⁷ which I cannot at this time commit to writing. It appeareth that he is in part offended with some proceedings, but yet easily mitigate, gif the great word to you known shall be spoken.

" The Flemish painter is in Stirling, in working of the king's portraiture, but expelled forth of the place at the beginning of thir troubles. I am presently travelling to obtain him licence to see the king's presence thrice in the day, till the end of his work; quhilk will be no sooner perfected nor nine days, after the obtaining of this licence."

No. V., page 30.

James's Letter to Mary.

In the State-paper Office there is an original letter of the young king, written at this time to his mother, the cap-

² Quhilk, which.

³ Fine, end.

⁴ Gif, if.

⁵ So in the original. The writer had meant to score out *be*, but forgot.

⁶ Thir twae, these two.

⁷ Morton is here meant, I think. What the "great word" was which the writer thinks would operate like a talisman on this proud and able peer, is not easily discovered.

tive queen. Mary had sent him a ring; and the little ape which appears in the postscript, whose fidelity he so much commends, was perhaps also a present from her.

The letter of James is as follows:—

JAMES VI. TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.¹

“ Je vous supplie tres humblement de croire que ce n'a pointe este de ma bonne volonté que vostre secrétaire s'en soit retorne sens quil m'aye donne vostre lettre, et faict entendre ce que luy avies commende de me dire ayant treu beaucoup de regret de ce qui sen est passé, car je serois infinitement fache que long crust que je ne vous voulu se porter l'honneur et le devoir que je vous doibs, ayant esperense que avecque le temps Dieu me fera grace de vous faire prendre de ma bonne et affectionnée amytée, sachent asses qu'apres luy tout l'honneur qu'ay en ce monde, je le tiens de vous.

“ Je resceu la bague quil vous a pleu m'envoyer laquelle je garderay bien pour l'honneur de vous. Et vous en envoye une aultre, que je vous supplie tres humblement de vouloir resevoir daussy bon cuer comme je resceu la vostre. Vous m'aves bien faict paroistre par les avertisemens quil vous a pleu me faire par vos dernieres lettres, combien vous metes bonne mere. Vous supplient tres humblement que sy en endendes davantage de men advertir pour y mettre ordre le mieulx quil me sera possible, aquoy je desja commense ainsi quentendres par le Compte de Lenox, vous supplient de m'y estre aydente et de me donner vostre bon conseil et avis lequel je veulx ensuyire a celle. De vous rendre plus certaine quen toute chose on il vous plaira de me commender vous me trouverez toujours vostre tres obeissant filz. Vous baiscent tres humblement les mains prient Dieu, &c.

“ Vostre obeisant Filz a jamais,

“ JACQUES R.²

“ Madame, je vous recommande la Fidelité de mon petit singe qui ne bouge daupres de moy, par lequel me manderes souvent de noz nouvelles.

“ A la Royne d'Escosse,

“ Ma tres Honores Dame.”

No. VI., page 31.

Letters on the Troubles, Trial, and Death of the Regent Morton.

The following interesting letters, relative to the troubles, trial, and death of the Regent Morton, are taken from the originals, preserved in the Harleian Collection in the British Museum. The volume of the Harleian is No. 6999, to which my attention was drawn by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson :—

SIR R. BOWES TO LORD BURGHLEY AND SIR FRANCIS WALSHAM. January 7, 1580-1.

“ It may please your good Lordship and your Honour. Yesterday Mr Archibald Douglas came out of Tyvedale hither, openly to Berwick, to seek her majesty's relief to the Earl of Morton in his present distress, and her highness's succour to himself. . .

“ He had offered himself for trial, if they would give him a fair trial, and exempt him from the torture which was threatened; but finding his house seized, and his goods and papers seized, he had fled to Berwick. . .

“ My servant, lately addressed into Scotland to learn the certainty of these new accidents, returned yesternight, giving me to understand, that on Saturday the last of December, as before hath been signified, Captain James Stewart, with the privy and especial commandment of the king, and in the council-chamber, in the presence of the king and that council, accused the Earl of Morton for the murder of the king's father; not opening particularly at that time any other offence against him, as once was intended, and as is pretended to be done hereafter. After large discourse made by the earl for his own acquittal, he concluded, and with such sharp words against the captain his accuser, as, ‘the captain returning to him like and bitter terms, they were ready to pass to blows, which was chiefly stayed by the Lords Lindsay and Cathcart; and the earl was removed into the chapel to his own servants, and the captain put out at the other door to the gardens; others that waited there in great numbers, looked for the beginning of the broil. Albeit many friends and servants of the earl, being a great strength, and able to have delivered him at his pleasure, persuaded the earl to put himself in safety; yet he refused to tarry with them, and returned to the council. And James

¹ January 29, 1580-1.

² This signature and the postscript are written in the young king's own hand.

Stewart, understanding of his presence there, rushed in again, whereupon a new scuffle began, that was likewise stayed by the lords aforesaid; and hereupon all the earl's servants and friends were commanded, upon pain of treason, to depart, and whereunto the earl commanded them to obey.

"The Earl of Argyle, Lord Chancellor, (the chief instrument against Morton,) asked the Earl of Angus, then sitting in council with them, what should be done; but Angus alleging that the matter did so narrowly touch and concern him, as he would not vote therein. Likewise the Earl of Lennox refused to vote. At length the Earl of Eglinton persuaded that the king's advocate and council might be conferred withal; which advocate being ready, affirmed that, upon such accusations of treasons, the party accused ought to be committed to sure custody, and afterwards tried as to the laws and case should appertain. Whereupon the Earl of Morton was committed to a chamber in Holyrood House, and there kept until the next Monday, on which he was conveyed to the castle of Edinburgh, where he remaineth. The town of Edinburgh, and many others, offered liberally for his delivery; nevertheless, he always refused to be delivered in any sort, other than by the order of the laws. Mr John Craig, in his sermon on the Sunday following, did, upon the leading of his text, inveigh greatly *against false accusations*. Whereupon Captain James Stewart, as it is informed for truth, threatened him with his dagger drawn, charging him to forbear to touch him, or otherwise he should receive his reward. . . . The Lord Boyd, accused also for the murder of the king's father, is summoned to appear, and not yet comed.

"It is said Sir James Balfour had come out of France. . . . It is now thought as dangerous in Scotland to confer with an Englishman, as to rub on the infected with the plague. . . .

"ROBERT BOWES."

RANDOLPH TO LORDS HUNSDON AND HUNTINGDON.¹

"Edinburgh, 16th March 1580-1.

The first portion of the letter is unimportant. He then proceeds as follows:—

"Angus's intent I know not. Yesterday it was determined in council he

¹ Harleian, 6999.

should be commanded to ward beyond the river of Spey. Carmichael, and the Prior, and Mains, are commanded not to come at Angus, on pain of forfeiture of their goods, *ipso facto*; and means is made to apprehend them, but yet none of them are taken. The Laird of Whittingham is boasted to wear the boots, but I hear it will not be so. Spot had a sight of them, as I hear. . . . All the court is set on mischief. Captain Stewart taketh upon him as a prince, and no man so forward as he. I spake, on Tuesday, long with the king. There passed nothing on his part from him, but very good speeches of her majesty, which I exhorted him to shew forth in actions and in deed. He promiseth much if the meeting of the commissioners be. I charged more his council than himself of the unkindness lately shewed unto the Q. my mistress, that no one point of her requests could be yielded, specially for the Earl of Morton, that was, [not] so much as his liberty upon sufficient caution, until the day were appointed for his trial, might be granted. Whereat he fell again in speech of Mr Archibald Douglas; and I answered him with partial dealings, and favour shewed to Sir James Balfour. I told him in what house he lieth in, between the church and castle, upon the right hand. I told who had spoken with him,—Lennox, Seton, and others; and that means would be made shortly to bring him into his own presence. I spake again of the *band in the green box*, containing the names of all the chief persons consenting to the king's murder, which Sir James either hath or can tell of. I told him that I heard daily of new men apprehended, examined, and boasted with the boots, to find matter against the Earl of Morton; and he that was privy to the murdrer, and in whose house the king was killed, and was therefore condemned by parliament, was suffered to live unpunished and untouched, in his chief and principal town." . . . Randolph then states that he asked leave to depart from Scotland, adding, that after another farewell interview with the king, he hoped, "it would be the last that he ever should have to do with that king and council." "I have again this day spoken with Angus's trusty friend, who gave me some notes touching the bands, and is gone unto him. I have given therein my advice. What will be far-

ther done I know not ; but sure I am Angus will not obey the charge for putting himself in ward. . . . George Fleck had yesternight the boots, and is said to have confessed that the Earl of Morton was privy to the poisoning of the Earl of Athole, whereon they have sent for the Earl of Morton's chamberlain, Sandy Jerdan, from Dumbarton. They have also in hand Sandy —, George Fleck's servant, whom they suppose to know many of Morton's secrets, &c.— Your L.

“ THOMAS RANDOLPH.”

RANDOLPH TO LORD HUNSDON.

“ March 20, 1580-1.

“ Whatsoever was intended by my Lord Angus is discovered by the voluntary confession of the Laird of Whittingham, that hath left nothing unspoken that he knew against any man, and much more than any man would have done upon so small occasion at all to say anything, being neither offered the boots, nor other kind of torment. The ministers have seen it, and in their sermons give God great thanks therefor.

“ The enterprise should have been (as they say) to have taken the house where the king lieth, by forged keys, and intelligence by some within ; to have slain the Earl of Lennox, Montrose, and Argyle ; and to have possessed themselves of the king to have sent him into England. Albeit, these things have so small appearance of truth to have been intended indeed, as for mine own part, I mean to suspend my judgment thereof till further trial be had.” “ He hath also confessed that he was here, with the Earl of Angus, at my lodging, and what passed between us. . . . I think it will fall out that George Fleck hath played as honest a part against his master, as Whittingham hath done for the Earl of Angus, for he hath been sore booted. But his legs serve him well enough to walk up and down, which I know to be true.

“ Poor Sandy Jerdan came yesterday to this town, from Dumbarton, and is lodged near to the court : one on whom the burden is laid to have ministered the bread and drink that poisoned Athole. So accused by Affleck. What is done to him I know not.

“ The suspicion of this poisoning of the Earl of Athole is thought to be great, for that it is said John Provend bought it. And he is fled thereupon, no man

knowing where he is. . . . Robert Semple, for the making of a ballad, is taken and put in prison. Robert Lekprevik, for the printing thereof, is also fled, but not found. . . .

“ THOMAS RANDOLPH.”

SIR JOHN FOSTER TO SIR F.
WALSINGHAM.¹

“ Pleasit your Honour to be advertised, that this day a man of mine, whom I sent into Scotland about certain business, is returned unto me with certain news, whereof I think my Lord of Hunsdon hath already written unto you ; but, notwithstanding, I thought I could do no less but advertise your honour thereof—that is, of the death of the Earl of Morton, who was convicted on Thursday, and adjudged to be hanged, drawn, and quartered on Friday. And there was twenty-two articles put against him ; but there was none that hurt him but the murder of the king, which was laid unto him by four or five sundry witnesses. The first is the Lord Bothwell's testament ; the second, Mr Archibald Douglas, when he was his man. Mr Archibald Douglas's man is the accuser of him, that bare a barrel of powder to the blowing up of the king into the air ; and that, for haste to come away, the said Mr Archibald Douglas left one of his pantafles at the house-end. And, moreover, he was convicted for the speaking with the Lord Bothwell after his banishment in England before the king's murder, and then the consenting to the murdering of the king, and the binding his band of men to the said Lord Bothwell to defend him, and no person to be excepted ; and the queen's confession, when she was taken at Carberrie Hill ; she said he was the principal man that was the deed doer and the drawer of that purpose. Thus, having none other news worthy of advertisement to send unto your honour at this time, I humbly take my leave, at my house, nigh Alnwick, this 4th June 1581.

“ JOHN FOSTER.”

“ P.S.—The man that brought me these news came from Edinburgh on Friday last, at two of the clock, and then the said Earl of Morton was standing on the scaffold, and it is thought the accusations that were laid against him were very slender, and that he died very stoutly.”

¹ Original, June 4, 1581, Alnwick.

No. VII., page 35.

Randolph's Negotiation in Scotland, and Elizabeth's Attempt to save Morton.

The following letter of Randolph to Walsingham, written immediately before his leaving that country, after his unsuccessful attempt to save Morton, and the abstract from his original account of his negotiation upon this subject, contain many interesting particulars, too detailed and minute for a general history :—

RANDOLPH TO WALSHINGHAM.¹

“ May it please your honour,—There is so much matter fallen out against Morton, as I am credibly informed, by the confession of Whittingham, brother to Archibald Douglas, George Fleck, Andrew Nesbit, John Reid, and Saunders Jerdan, that it is thought nothing can now save his life. The king’s self is so vehement against him, and not one counsellor that dare open his mouth for him. All men are appalled; courage and stomach quite overthrown. His enemies pursue these matters hot against him, and his friends able to do him no good. Neither can I yet be particularly informed of the matters they have against him. I think his days will not be long here; and yet have I wrought for him, and yet do for him as for mine own self. The good course that was intended for meeting of commissioners is now smally accounted of; alleging now that nothing less was intended than that Morton’s case should be committed to treaty. Your honour hath now both to consider and advise what is to be done, and that with all expedition.

“ . . . I have been here so well dealt with, that, besides the libel set upon my lodging’s door on Wednesday last, I had a shot bestowed on the window of my chamber, in the place where I am wont to sit and write. My good hap was to be away when it was shot, otherwise either Milles or I had been past writing; for the piece being charged with two bullets, struck the wall opposite before me, and behind him, where I am accustomed to sit, the table between us. Some show of search is made for fashion’s sake. The rest I have written to my Lord Hunsdon, &c. And so . . . Edinburgh, 25th March 1581.

T. R.”

¹ Orig., March 25, 1581.

MR RANDOLPH’S NEGOTIATION IN SCOTLAND.²

“ 17th January, R. took his journey into Scotland from Berwick.

“ By the way, he received word of Morton’s being removed from Edinburgh castle to Dumbarton castle, which made him hasten forward. Next day after his arrival he had an audience of the king. The king promised Morton should be put to his trial.

“ 2d Audience, 21st January.—The king promised that nothing should be done against Morton without open trial and lawful favour. About this time came the bruit of her majesty’s forces about the Borders; this gave him [Randolph] greater boldness to proceed both with the king and against D’Aubigny.

“ 3d Audience, 25th January.—R. charged some of the Scottish council with breaking the amity, especially Lennox, and produced two intercepted letters, written by the B. of Glasgow. Lennox warmly defended himself. He gave copies of the letters, and demanded a speedy reply. All this time the report of the forces on the Borders continued.

“ 4th Audience, 30th January.—The king begged to hear any further matter against Lennox. After this the ambassador began to deal according to the third part of his instructions: to deal with such of the nobility as came unto him; to represent the hazard to the king’s person, and the danger to themselves, (intending to make out a party in this way, fit to join with her majesty’s forces.) At first he had good hope; but finding that, day by day, the king grew more affectionate to the one and aggravated against the other, they all began to fail; and ‘no man seemed willing either to enterprise it himself, or join with others in this action.’ As these things were thus underhand in brewing, the king sent his answer by a clerk of the council.

“ 1st, That Morton’s trial was delayed for want of Archibald Douglas.

“ 2d, The matter against Lennox seemed to be forged.

“ After this, the king assembled the general estates of the realm, the matter being weighty, on the 20th February. The interval gave R. time to labour privately with the nobility, represent-

² The original paper, of which this is an abstract, appears to me to be in the hand writing of one of Walsingham’s clerks.

ing the greatness of Aubigny, his offences against Elizabeth, and the danger to themselves. He also, in a private access to the king, laid before him his estate at large : the king took all well.

" All this time the Earl of Lennox made private means to speak with Randolph, standing still upon his purgation, which (being so commanded) he still resisted, which, notwithstanding grieved him [Randolph] much, as he understood a reconciliation was about to be wrought between Lennox and Morton, and the king approved of it; and was to have gone to Glasgow the better to contrive the matter; 'albeit that purpose took not effect; for Morton's friends, esteeming this course dis honourable, broke it off.'

" It was next determined to send Lord Seton from the king to her maj.

" This stayed by Randolph.

" The bruit of the gathering of English forces on the Borders continuing, it was determined to appoint a lieutenant and twelve captains, with commissions to levy 120 men.

" All this time, as matters grew worse, Mr Randolph omitted not underhand to procure a party, labouring by all means to make Morton's case fearful unto them, and the greatness of Lennox odious; alluring them by promises of Elizabeth's support. Notwithstanding all, *vel prece vel pretio*, though many seemed forward, no man would be foremost,—no assurance could be had except on Angus, Mar, and Glencairn. They said, also, there was a want of sufficient proof of the matters with which Lennox was charged withal.

" On the other hand, the friends of Lennox were not idle, and made a great impression, urging that Elizabeth's injustice and severity against an innocent man, shewed she had more in view than the trial of Morton and the dismissal of D'Aubigny.

" At last the 20th of February, the day of the convention, arrived. R. before it had a private conference with the king, and he obtained an audience of the whole assembly on the 24th February, when he repeated all his message and arguments,—shewed all that the queen had done for the realm and the king, in a speech of almost two hours' length,—added some further matter against D'Aubigny, contained in Ross's letter, and so left the Parlia-

ment House. D'Aubigny at that assembly said nothing.

" To this assembly came Angus, with his friends, having all the time before kept himself aloof, (he had assurance from the king,) spending the day within doors, and the night in the fields, for fear of his enemies; but, as it fortuned, his abode was not long in Edinburgh, for being secretly advised of certain practices intended against him by the Earl of Montrose and his own wife, upon the intercepting of certain letters passed between them, suddenly, in the night, he departed the town unto Dalkeith; where, finding his wife, and after speech with her, he in due time prevented the mischief, acquainted the king with the matter dealing by Mar, who abode still in court, and sent her away home unto her father.¹

" The convention held not long. It was agreed, if war came from England, £40,000 Scots should be advanced by the barons and boroughs. Every day bred a new disorder. The bruit of wars grew stronger,—men stirring in all parts,—the ambassador grew odious, and his death suspected, and the court in a manner desperate. For all this he forbore not to call for his answer: the council was perplexed, and Lennox still stood up to his justification.

" Morton abode still at Dumbarton, straitlier kept than before, (although his larger liberty was craved by the ambassador.) Angus absented himself from the court; and being suspected of dealing with the ambassador, made Lennox, Montrose, and Argyle, and that party, stand on their guard. The party from the first got up by the ambassador, yet hung in doubt; but Angus was weakened by the late accident. Montrose and Rothes became his deadly enemies, and all went wrong.

" 8th March. The answer so long in framing was at last given by the king. It was stated in it, that all griefs and jealousies should be healed by a meeting of *commissioners* on the frontiers. During the time that this answer was a framing, the ministers, who continually in their sermons preached against the disorders of the court, to prevent the wrath of God, that now seemed to be imminent, published a general fast, to be held through the realm from the first Sunday in March to the second of the same. This promised meeting of commissioners on the Borders might

¹ Her father was Mar.

have been to good purpose, had it not been for the discovery of the practices between Angus and the ambassador, by Angus and Morton's own servants, which caused the ambassador to be greatly suspected and disliked. Whereupon all persons were examined that resorted to him—viz., George Fleck, the Laird of Mains, the Laird of Spot, John Reid, and Whittingham,¹ all servants and nearest kinsmen to Morton and Angus. Angus himself was banished beyond the Spey. He laboured, notwithstanding, by conference with the clans, his friends Glencairn, Boyd, Lochleven, Clanquill, Dryburgh, and Drumquhassel, to combine together a sufficient party to join with her majesty's forces on the Borders; and might have wrought good effect, had not their own trustiest servants betrayed them, overthrowing all their purposes, to the great danger of themselves and Mr Randolph. The faithless and traitorous dealing of Whittingham was most noted, like a deep dissembler and fearful wretch. From the beginning, having had the handling and knowledge of all matters of importance and secrecy between Angus and the rest, in the end, without compulsion, by a voluntary confession, he discovered their whole proceedings, not regarding his nearness of blood, or bond of duty, to the Earls of Angus and Morton, or the danger he threw the other noblemen into. This man's treachery made Angus be put to the horn, and the ambassador ill handled. The king upon this intending to acquaint Elizabeth with the result of the confessions by an envoy, and proceeding with greater severity against Angus, Morton, and Mar, Randolph, finding his longer abode useless, and dangerous to himself, retired to Berwick, there to await her majesty's further orders. Within two days a gentleman from Angus and Mar came to him to declare their state, and wishing to know when and where they were to await his coming. But finding their party not sufficiently strong nor trustworthy, it was thought imprudent to hazard the advance of her majesty's forces; and so the messenger was dismissed. Thus were they deserted. In the meantime news came daily of their proscription, and seizing their houses, summoning of Stirling castle held by Mar, fortifying Leith; at last they heard that Mar was reconciled, and Angus left alone. Such being the state

¹ Douglas of Whittingham.

of matters, it was thought best to discharge her majesty's forces, to remain in these terms of *divorce*, and to call Mr Randolph home."²

It appears, in the above account of Randolph's negotiation, although I have not given the passage in the abstract, that at one time there was a proposal for a reconciliation between Lennox and Morton, on conditions which the king approved of. The following paper shews that these conditions were of the most severe nature, imprisonment for life being the first:—

CONDITIONS OFFERED BY THE KING TO
MORTON AND ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS.
—16th May.

- “Angus to move his uncle—
- “1. That he shall be confined for life.
- “2. That the Earl of Morton and A. D.³ shall renounce all actions for goods taken from them since 29th December last.
- “3. That he shall give up Dalkeith to the king for ever.
- “4. Renounce his right to the castle of Blackness, and sheriffship and lands of Linlithgow, to the king.
- “5. Give up the office of Admiralty and sheriffship of Lothian to the king.
- “6. Cause his base son, James, prior of Pluscardine, give the priory to Lord Seton.
- “7. Pay the whole charges of the soldiers levied since last December.
- “8. Pay to the king a 100 stone weight of bullion, coined without warrant during his regency.”

No. VIII., page 44.

Scottish Preaching in 1582. John Durie's Sermon.

The sermon of Mr John Durie, alluded to in the text, is particularly described in the following extract from a letter of Sir Henry Woddrington to Sir Francis Walsingham. It is preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. vii. fol. 7, and dated 26th May 1582:—

WODDRINGTON TO WALSINGHAM.

“Upon Wednesday, being the 23d inst., Mr John Durie preached in the Cathedral Church of Edinburgh, where divers noblemen were present, the effect

² Original, May 6.

³ Archibald Douglas.

thereof tending to the reproof of the Bishop of Glasgow, as plainly terming him an apostate and mansworn traitor to God and His Church. And that even as the Scribes and Pharisees could find none so meet to betray Christ as one of His own school and disciples, even so this duke, with the rest of the faction, cannot find so meet an instrument to subvert the religion planted in Scotland as one of their own number, one of their own brethren, and one nourished among their own bowels, who likewise touched the virtuous bringing up of the king, fearing now they have some device to withdraw him from the true fear of God, and to follow the devices and inventions of men, affirming that he was moved to think so, for that he saw all that were manifestly known to be enemies to the Church and religion to be nearest unto his person, and others that were favourers and maintainers thereof put off the court, or to have small countenance there shewed them. And likewise, he touched the present sent by the Duke of Guise to the king in these manner of speeches:—‘I pray you what should move Guise, that bloody persecutor and enemy unto all truth, that pillar of the Pope, to send this present by one of his trustiest servants unto our king? Not for any love: no, no, his pretence is known. And I beseech the Lord the Church of Scotland feel it not oversoon. The king’s majesty was persuaded not to receive it; for why? What amity or friendship can we look for at his hands, who hath been the bloodiest persecutor of the professors of the truth in all France? Neither was there ever any notable murder or havoc of God’s people at any time in all France but he was at it in person; and yet for all this, the duke and Arran will needs have our king to take a present from him. If God did threaten the captivity and spoil of Jerusalem because that their king, Hezekiah, did receive a letter and present from the King of Babylon, shall we think to be free committing the like, or rather worse? And because you, my lords, which both do see me, and even at this present hears me,—I say, because you shall not be hereafter excusable,—I tell it you with tears. I feel such confusion to be like to ensue that I fear me will be the subversion and ruin of the preaching of God’s Evangile here in the Church of Scotland. I am the more plain with you, because I know there is some of you in the me action with the

rest. I know I shall be called to an account for these words here spoken; but let them do with this carcass of mine what they will, for I know my soul is in the hands of the Lord, and therefore I will speak, and that to your condemnation, unless you speedily return.’ And then, in the prayers made, he prayed unto the Lord, either to convert or confound the duke. The sermon was very long, godly, and plain, to the great comfort and rejoice of the most number that heard it or do hear of it.”

No. IX., page 48.

Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, written immediately previous to the Raid of Ruthven.—15th August 1582.

The minute and accurate information of Bowes, communicated to Walsingham and the faction of the Protestant lords, which led to the enterprise termed the Raid of Ruthven, is proved by the following extract from a letter of Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, dated Durham, 15th August 1582:—

BOWES TO WALSINGHAM.

“ . . . I am informed the duke intendeth to persuade the king’s majesty to commit to ward the Earls of Glencairn and Mar, the Lord Lindsay and Boyd, and sundry others, best affected in religion, and loving the amity aforesaid; and also afterwards to hasten the death of the principals of them, whom I hear that he will not pursue for the death of David the Italian, (as from France ye have been advertised,) but rather to charge them with late matter and conspiracy intended, and to have been put in execution by them and their complices in the last month of July against the king and himself. And in case the information given me be true, then there is a secret intention and practice in device,—that after the execution of such principal persons in Scotland as would be most ready to defend religion, and the apprehension and safe custody of others known to be chiefly devoted that way, the alteration of that state in Scotland should be attempted: and the matter to reach into England so far, and with such speed as the [confederates] who practise could perform. The truth and secret herein may be best learned in France, I think, from whence the device and direction for the execution is said to come. The

variance between the duke and the Earl of Gowrie,—the progress of the matter against the new bishop of Glasgow, both entreated in Edinburgh,—the labour of the duke to win nobles and gentlemen to enter into friendship and band with him,—the purpose of some persons in Scotland to proceed in the provision of remedy against the dangerous course presently holden there,—with all other intelligence and occurrences in that state and realm . . . are so sufficiently signified to you, as I need not trouble you with needless repetition."

The conspiracy with which Lennox meant to charge the Protestant party alluded to in the above letter of Bowes, must be the same as that mentioned by Sir Henry Woddrington in a letter addressed (as I think) to Walsingham some time before this, dated 19th July 1582. After stating that the king was with the duke at St Johnston, he observed that "the ministers had accused the duke of supporting the Bishop of Glasgow, who was excommunicated." He then adds, "The duke is about to charge them with the late conspiracy and practice, wherein they were about to have procured him to have been shot and slain." . . .

No. X., page 52.

Archibald Douglas to Randolph.

It is stated in the text that, on the successful issue of the Raid of Ruthven, the notorious Archibald Douglas wrote from London an exulting letter to his old friend, Randolph. The original is in the State-paper Office, endorsed by Randolph himself "*Mr Nemo.*" It is spirited and characteristic :—

ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS TO RANDOLPH.—
12th September 1582, London.

"Sir,—From Scotland, by letters, I am advertised that the duke being in Edinburgh with some few lords, he made choice of Herries and Newbottle to send the king, and lords with his majesty, some offers, which were all rejected.

"The said lords returned to Edinburgh accompanied with Cessford and Coldingknowes, who gave the duke a charge to render the castle of Dumbarton to the Earl of Mar, in name of the king; to avoid the town of Edinburgh, and retire himself to Dalkeith or Aberdour, in private manner, there to await

the king's farther pleasure. The duke seeming to obey the charge, made him as he would ride to Dalkeith; but in the midway he turned, and is fled to Dumbarton, where I think he shall not make great cheer, if he render not that castle shortly.

"The king will hold his convention at Edinburgh upon the 15th day hereof; to the which the duke is charged to compear; but I think he shall not obey. When law has given the stroke against him, I believe ye shall hear news of his escaping. Your special good friend, the Earl of Arran, for the singular and constant affection he bears to the duke, offers to accuse him of high treason, if they will spare his life to serve and assist the party that is with the king. Pity it were that he should not be well used in respect of his rare qualities, natural, beautified with his virtuous education in moral philosophy; wherein he has so well profited, that his behaviour is marvellous, specially in treating of ambassadors; which makes me to believe that your worship, as one honoured with that dignity, will interpose some special request in his favours. If ye be disposed so to do, I will take the pains to be your messenger, for the safe conveying thereof to her majesty's ministers in Scotland.

"Your physic, ministered at your late being in that realm, begins now to be of so mighty operation, that banished men are like to have place to seek trial of their innocency, or else, I think, very shortly it shall be hard to discern the subject from the traitor. From such a market ye may think that I shall not be long absent. I am to take my journey towards that country shortly. If your sorel horse's price be so low as a poor banished man's money may amount unto it, I pray you send him hither, and I will pay what price ye set upon him, so it be reasonable. And so, &c.

"London, this 12th of September.
"A. DOUGLAS."

No. XI., page 55.

The Duke of Lennox's last Letter to the King of Scots.

This letter is preserved in the State-paper Office, in a copy of the time, endorsed by Burghley, "From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish King from Dumbarton, 16th December 1582." It is as follows :—

“Sire,—Je me rescens le plus malheureux homme du monde, de voir la mauvaise opinion que vostre majeste a prise de moy, et de ce que la persuasion de ceux, qui sont aupres de vous maintenant, vous ont fait croire, que j’avois autrre intention que de vous rendre l’obeissance et la fidelite que je vous doibs. Croyez je vous supplie tres humblement, que ces motz d’inconstance et desloyaulte que me mandes dans vostre lettre qu’ay laisse gaigner a mes ennemis sur moy, m’ont rapporte une grande crevecoeur. Car je n’eusse jamais pense que vostre majeste m’eust voulu ecrire telz mots, et je me prie a Dieu que tous ceulx qui vous serve, et se disent vos fideles serviteurs, vous serve avec autant d’affection et de fidelite comme jay le fait, pendant que jay eu ceste honneur d’estre a vostre service.

“Sire,—Je ne crains nullement deestre accuse d’inconstance et de desloyaulte. C’est chose jamais remarque en moy, mais si l’on me veult accuser d’avoir faict une tasche a mon honneur pour vous obeir, il faut bien que je l’aveoue, car il est tres veritable, et me sensible que l’engagement de mon dict honneur vous doibt assez rendre le preuve de ma dict obeissance et fidelite.

“Ce m’est ung piteux reconfort a mon partement, que apres avoir receu le dur traictment que jay receu, et endure les paines, et tormens et ennuis ; qu’ay endure depuis trois ans, pour m’estre affectionné a vostre service, en vous servant fidelement (comme jay faict) que de voir voistre majeste indigne contre moy, pour seulement avoir evite le danger qui me pouvoit avenir, et lequelle peutestre avoit este conclu sans vostre sceu, sous ombre que les Comptes d’Angus et de Mar n’avoient pas signé l’asseurance, dont la procuration de dict Mar peut donner asses tesmoignage. Et pense que si tout chose soit bien recherecheé que [vous] trouverez que comme il estoit entre Falkirk et Callender, qu’il y en a eu de sa troupe, que lui donnera conseil de m’enfermer au dict Callender, et d’envoyer querir a le dict Angous, ce qu’ayant entendu, voyant qu’il n’y avoit pas ung des seigneurs n’y gentilhommes aryves a Lythgou, le Mardy a six heures de soir, excepte Laird de Wachton et les serviteurs et amis de Mons^r. de Leviston, pour la seurte de ma vie, laquelle je scay estre rechercheé par eux, je me suis seulement retire en ce lieu, en attendant que

vostre majeste donnast ordre que je puisse passer seurement, et ce qui vous avoit demandé de passer par Carleill, estoit parce que ce chemin la m’estoit beaucoup plus seur que celui de Barwick. Mais puis que c’est vostre volonté que je prenne ce chemin la je vous obeiray, et suyvant vostre commandement je partiray Mardy de ce lieu et m’en iray coucher a Glasgow, le Mecredy a Callender, en Jeudy a Dalkeith, et Vendredy a Dunbar, et si mes hardes que je suis constraint de faire faire a Lislebourg, me soyent apportees le jour la, je ne faudray d’estre le lendemain a Barwick, et ou elles me pourront estre apportees. Je vous supplie tres humblement, de me permettre de les attendre au dict Dunbar, et de me vouloir faire envoyer a Dalkeith tout ce que m’avez promis, par le dict Maistre George Young, et aussi de mander ung gentilhomme de me venir renconter que le dict Maistre George mande a vostre majeste, lequel vous yra trouver puis qu’il m’a veu party de — a fin de vous assurer de l’obeissance que je vous vouley rendre.— Pariant Dieu, sire, qu’il vous ayt en sa sauve garde. De Dumbarton, 16 de Decembre 1582.

“De vostre majeste,

“Le tres humble et fidele serviteur,
“LENNOX.”

No. XII., page 64.

The King’s Recovery of his Liberty in 1583.

In the month of May 1583, when James was pondering on the plot for the recovery of his liberty, and his escape from the thralldom in which he was kept by the Ruthven lords, there occurs a remarkable letter written by Fowler to Walsingham, which shews that the young king had first disclosed his secret intentions to the Master of Glammis. This is strange enough; for Glammis, as we have seen, (*supra*, p. 49,) was one of the leaders of the “Raid of Ruthven.” The letter is as follows.—It is preserved in British Museum, Caligula, C. vii. fol. 148:—

FOWLER TO WALSINGHAM.

“May 1583.

“MY LORD,—After my most humble commendations and service, I do send your honour such proofs of my fidelity, that your honour may thereby well judge of my true meaning. The king hath entered in conference with the

Master of Glammis after this sort:—‘I intend to go in progress, and first to Falkland, and thereafter to the Glammis. What think you Master,—shall I be welcome?’ The other answered that his welcome should be better than his majesty’s entertainment; because, saith he, ‘I am less able now than I was these five years before:’ meaning of his loss and fine of xx. thousand pounds, which he paid, by the Duke of Lennox’s means, for the killing of the Earl of Crawford’s man. The king answered, ‘Master, are you not yet contented and sufficiently revenged? If you had not turned that night to Ruthven, these things, which were then devised, would never have taken effect. Well, Master, I will forgive you; and if you will conform yourself now to my request, your losses shall be faithfully repaired you hereafter.’—‘Sir,’ said he, ‘what is your will? Command me in anything: your majesty shall be obeyed,—yea, were it in the killing of the best that are about your majesty.’ The king answered, ‘Master, I mean not so: but because I think it stands not with my honour to be guided by other men’s will, I would things were changed,—which you only may perform, if you follow my device. None mistrusteth you; and, therefore, I will come to the Glammis, where you may have such power for that effect, that I will remain your prisoner, so that you debar these from me who hath me at their devotion.’ To conclude, the other hath agreed thereto, and shall conclude therein, if good counsel prevent it not. . . .

“As these things must come to light, so would I they so should be used, as the chief intelligence should be known not to have comed from hence; otherwise I shall be suspected, and incur the king’s hatred and the Master of Glammis’s displeasure.”

No. XIII., page 68.

Walsingham’s Embassy to the Scottish Court in September 1583.

The following letter, from the State-paper Office, relates to this interesting embassy:—

WALSINGHAM TO BURGHLEY.

“Edinburgh, 6th September 1583.

“My very good Lord,—Since I last wrote unto your lordship I have received three sundry letters from you, by the which I find your lordship hath obtained

so much leisure as to see your house at Burghley; where I could have been content, having finished here, to her majesty’s contentment the charge committed to me, to have met your lordship.—I mean with the leave of God, according to my promise made to Sir Thomas Cecil, to see him there, and to survey such faults as have been committed in your buildings by reason of your lordship’s absence; and yet am I in hope to come time enough in my return to see him at Snape; for here I see little hope to do any good, so resolutely and violently are they carried into a course altogether contrary to the amity of this crown, which by the better sort is greatly disliked of: and it is thought that they which have the whole managing of the affairs cannot long stand, so hateful do they grow generally to all estates in this realm.

“Though I press my audience very earnestly, yet can they not resolve neither of the time nor place. They are now, as I learn, busily occupied how they may excuse their breaches of promises and other attempts against her majesty, but most especially how they may excuse the late outrage committed in the middle marches, by yielding fair words and promises for satisfaction. This kind of proceeding cannot but render them hateful that now manage the affairs; for I find the Borderers, the loose men only excepted, generally inclined to continue good peace with England. The Burrows, also, who live by traffic, and are grown to be wealthy by the long-continued peace between the two realms, do not willingly hear of any breach. The ministers, who foresee how greatly the common cause should be shaken if discord between the two nations should break out, will not omit to do their best endeavours to prevent the same. I will not fail, at my access, to press both speedy redress and full satisfaction, as well of that outrage as of divers others committed this last month. . . . It shall be necessary for her majesty, in these doubtful times, considering how they stand affected that have now the helm in hand here, to place some horsemen and footmen upon the Borders for a season, which may serve well for some other purpose, as your lordship shall hereafter understand. . . . At Edinburgh, the 6th September 1583.

“Your lordship’s. &c.

“FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.

"After I had written my letter, Mr James Melvil came unto me from the king to excuse the delay of my audience, without bringing any certain knowledge when the same should be granted, which moved me to deal roundly with him."

No. XIV.

Historical Remarks on the Queen of Scots' supposed Accession to Babington's Conspiracy.

That Mary was a party to this plot, so far as it involved a project for her escape, may be assumed as certain; indeed, she appears to have admitted it, by implication at least, on her trial. But the question remains, and it is one deeply affecting Elizabeth and her ministers—Was she cognisant of the resolution to assassinate the English queen?—did she permit, or encourage this atrocious design? After a careful research into the history of this conspiracy, and an anxious desire to procure and weigh every document connected with it, I believe Mary's solemn assertion to be true,—that she neither gave any encouragement to the plot, nor was aware of its existence. Hume, who pronounces Mary guilty, has written on this conspiracy with all his inimitable clearness and plausibility; but unfortunately with much of his usual carelessness as to facts and dates, which enter deeply into the question, and which a little trouble might have enabled him to discover and to rectify. Dr Lingard, in an acute note added to the last edition of his History,¹ has supported Mary's innocence; and Dr Robertson, without interrupting his narrative by critical remarks, has assumed it. Referring the reader to the works of these eminent men, I shall now briefly give some additional facts and observations, from which there arises the strongest presumption, if not absolute proof, of the innocence of the Queen of Scots.

First. It is evident, from the history of this conspiracy as given in the text, that Phelipps the decipherer had much, almost everything, in his power as to the proof of Mary's guilt or innocence. He was admitted by Walsingham into all "the secrets of the cause," (to use Paulet's phrase;) he enjoyed the full confidence of this minister and his royal mistress. It does not appear that any

other person about Walsingham or the Queen of England could decipher. There are letters in the State-paper Office, and in the British Museum, which prove that whenever any intercepted letters in cipher fell into the hands of Elizabeth or Secretary Walsingham, they were forthwith sent to Phelipps "to be made English;"² and it is certain that he did decipher, and retain in his hands for ten days, the letter in cipher from Mary to Babington, upon a copy of which that princess was convicted. It is evident from all this, that Phelipps had the power and the opportunity to alter the letters of Babington or of Mary which were sent him to be deciphered; and owing to the ignorance of his employers in this intricate science, he might have done so without much, or almost any fear of discovery. But it may be asked, Could he be so base as to garble these letters? or was Walsingham so lost to all sense of justice and honour as to have permitted it?

To this I reply, that there is preserved in the State-paper Office a letter or petition of Phelipps to the Earl of Salisbury, an extract from which I give below, which proves, that in one noted instance he had availed himself of his talents and opportunity to a base and unscrupulous extent. In this case he did not add to or alter any letter placed in his hands; but he did much more. He composed, or created, an entirely imaginary correspondence. He wrote

² MS. Letter, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 455. Davison to Phelipps, December 11.

DAVISON TO PHELIPPS.

"Mr Phelipps. Her majesty delivered me the ticket here enclosed for your exercise, because she thinketh you now be idle. When you have *made English thereof*, I doubt not but you will return it back to her highness: and so, in the meantime, I commit you to God.—At the court the 11th December."

There is another letter of Walsingham in Caligula, C. ix. fol. 455, written, I think, evidently to Phelipps, though the address does not appear:

"I send you herewith enclosed another letter, written from the King of Spain unto some noblemen within this realm, which was delivered unto me by her majesty, together with the other letter of Don Bernardino remaining in your hands, *which, if it may be deciphered*, will, I hope, lay open the treachery that reigneth here amongst us. Her majesty hath promised to double your pension, and to be otherwise good unto you.—And so I commit you to God. The 30th Nov. 1585.

"F. WALSHAM."

¹ Note M., vol. viii., History of England, n. 434

letters under the name of an imaginary person to a real person, who enjoyed the confidence of the Spanish government, and who, by the forgery of these letters, was betrayed into a correspondence with Phelipps, who made his own uses of his base contrivance. All this he acknowledges in a letter to the Earl of Salisbury, which is an undoubted original, written in his own hand,¹ pleading, in extenuation of the forgery, that it was done for the benefit of the state.

Such being the unscrupulous character of this person, is it any overstrained supposition, that such a man would have felt little hesitation in altering the

¹ State-paper Office, April 29, 1606. Thomas Phelipps, original, in his own hand, dated (in pencil) April 29, 1606 :—

"Phelipps humbly prayeth, that the king's majesty may be moved to descend into a gracious consideration of his case, and he doubteth not but his majesty shall find cause to conceive much better of his proceedings than it seemeth he doth.

"The truth is, that there never was any real or direct correspondence held with Owen. But, by a mere stratagem and sleight in the late queen's time, that state upon an occasion, was entertained in an opinion of an intelligence with an imaginary person on this side, such as was none *in rerum naturâ*, which Owen, abused, did manage on that side, as Phelipps for the queen's service did on this. The manner whereof and the means were particularly declared to my Lord of Salisbury by Ph. when he was first called in question, who had himself made some use of it in the queen's time; and you, Mr Lieutenant, can, best of any man, remember how the queen and my Lord of Essex served themselves of it.

"In the carriage of this business, the imaginary correspondent being pressed to find somebody that should set afoot certain overtures, touching peace and the jewels of the house of Burgundy, and suchlike, Phelipps was nominated and used for those purposes, to the contentment of both sides, as it fell out at sundry times, without that it was known, or so much as suspected, that Phelipps was the man that indeed managed all matters.

"With the queen's life this course was supposed to have been quite determined; but shortly after, upon the hope of amity which was growing between this realm and Spain, an address was newly made to the imaginary correspondent in Maucididor's name, to have Phelipps moved to concur with those that should be set a-work both for peace and league of firm amity between the princes, with large offers, and promises of honourable gratification to all such as could do any good therein.

"Which being a thing in itself not unlawful, and Phelipps seeing opportunity offered him to make himself thereby of use, he willingly embraced."

letters of the Queen of Scots, to suit the purposes of her enemies?

But here it is asked, (and the argument is insisted on by Hume,) Would a man of such high honour and probity as Walsingham have been guilty of so base a proceeding? As to this alleged probity and honour, Hume, it is evident, trusted to the common eulogies, which, in popular works, have been bestowed on Elizabethan statesmen. Happily, however, the correspondence of Elizabeth's ministers remains to test this praise; and Walsingham has left many letters which prove uncontestedly that, in working out any object which he was persuaded was for the good of the state, he was quite as crafty and unscrupulous as his brethren: In those dark times, the scale of moral duty and honour was miserably low: justice, truth, religion, were names common in men's mouths, but slightly regarded in their actual dealings. To open letters, to rob an ambassador's desk, to corrupt his servants, to forge his signature, were all allowable methods of furthering the business of the state. The reader is already well aware of the little value placed on human life, of the frequency of private assassination, and the encouragement given to it by the highest statesmen of the age. To argue on the honour and probity of such men—as we should be entitled to do had they lived in our own times (lax as this age may be in some things)—must lead to error. Nay, Hume himself was aware of, and states one instance in which Walsingham acted with a total disregard of all high principle. This historian tells us that the English secretary, when he had intercepted and opened Mary's letters to Babington, added to them a postscript in the same cipher, in which she desired him to inform her of the names of the conspirators; hoping thus to elicit from Babington the whole secrets of the plot. Was it possible that any man of common probity could have so acted? and what are we to think of his letter quoted in the text, in which, in obedience to the English queen's commands, he solicited Paulet to put Mary privately to death? Could a man of the slightest probity have written that letter?

It appears, then, that Phelipps and Walsingham were persons capable of such a course as garbling and altering Mary's letters: it is evident that Phelipps had the power and the talent to

do so; and we have seen, from the history of the conspiracy given in the text, that both were anxious to convict her and bring her to punishment. But it may be said, All this is presumption: where is the proof that they added anything to these letters? In answer to this may be first quoted, the forged postscript endorsed in Phelipps's handwriting, "*Postscript of the Scottish Queen's letter to Babington,*"¹ inquiring the names of the six gentlemen. Hume, following Camden,² asserts that Walsingham added a postscript of this import to one of Mary's letters to Babington. It is singular, however, that it should not have struck this historian, that no such postscript appeared in any of Mary's alleged letters produced at the trial; and had this charge, which involves so grave a delinquency in Walsingham, rested on the single assertion of Camden, one would certainly have hesitated to believe it. But the case is altered by the discovery (mentioned in the text, p. 127) of this postscript in cipher, endorsed by Phelipps, and preserved in the State-paper Office. Now, such a postscript was either what it purports to be—an original of Mary's, or a true copy of such an original, or a forgery. If it were an original of Mary's, or a true copy of such, why, it may be asked, was it not produced against her at the trial? It connected her with the six conspirators, who were Babington's associates; and in this light would have been decided evidence against her. But no use was made of it at the trial; and it may be conjectured, from this suppression, that, after having exercised his skill in fabricating it, Phelipps changed his scheme for the conviction of the Scottish queen, and introduced the sentences connecting her with the six gentlemen who were to assassinate the English queen into the body of the letters, rather than in a postscript at the end.

In the next place, although there is no direct evidence by which we can detect Phelipps or Walsingham in the act of garbling and altering Mary's letters, yet strong presumptive evidence is furnished by the circumstances of the trial itself; and this even after making allowance for the partiality and disregard of justice which appears in

all the judicial proceedings of those times.

It is evident that Mary could only be proved guilty by the production of her own letters; by the production of the minutes, or rough drafts of these in her own hand; by the evidence of her secretaries, Nau and Curle, who wrote the letters; or by the evidence of Phelipps, who deciphered them. The limits to which I must confine these remarks will not permit me to go into detail; but it may be observed, that on each of these modes of proof, the evidence against the Scottish queen either totally fails, or is defective.

1. No original of Babington's long letter to her, or of her answer to Babington, was produced. Mary anxiously demanded the production of both; and positively asserted that she had never written the letter of which they produced a copy; but she demanded it in vain, and she was convicted on the evidence of this avowed copy.

2. It was stated by Nau, her secretary, that the greater part of her letter to Babington was copied by him from a minute in Mary's own hand, written in French, which, he stated, would be found amongst her papers,³ and which, if we are to believe Nau's declaration, Elizabeth and her ministers had really in their hands, and could have produced if they pleased.⁴ Now, these French minutes, written in Mary's hand, if they had contained the guilty passages connecting her with the plot against Elizabeth's life, would undoubtedly have proved the case against her. Why, then, were they not produced? It seems plain that, if found at all, of which there is reason to doubt,⁵ they

³ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, September 7, 1586.

WAAD TO PHELIPPS.

"Her majesty's pleasure is, you should presently repair hither; for that, upon Nau's confession, it should appear we have not performed the search sufficiently; for he doth assure we shall find, amongst the minutes which were in Pasquier's chests, the copies of the letters wanting, both in French and English."

⁴ Orig., State-paper Office, Nau's first answer, September 3, 1586.—"Il luy pleut me bailler une minute de lettre escripte de sa main pour la polir et mettre au net, ainsi qu'il apparaoit a vos Honneurs avoir este fait qu'il l'une et l'autre entre vos mains."

⁵ On the 3d September, Nau, in a paper in the State-paper Office, endorsed by Burghley, "Nau's first Answer," speaks as if Elizabeth and her ministers had Mary's original minutes,

¹ *Supra*, p. 127.

² Hume, p. 453. Edition 1832. In one volume. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii p. 517.

did not contain any mention of the plot against Elizabeth's life. Here again the proof against the Scottish queen totally fails.

3. As to Nau and Curle, the manner of dealing with these two secretaries of Mary, betrays in a striking way the weakness of the proof against her. She anxiously requested to be allowed to examine them; and engaged, if this were permitted, to prove by their testimony that she was innocent. This was denied: she was shewn some depositions to which they had attached their signatures; and other declarations were produced, wholly written by them, the contents of which, it was argued, proved her guilty of sending the long letter to Babington. Mary's reply to these depositions has been already stated in the text; but it is here material to attend to an observation of Dr Lingard, who contends, and apparently with perfect justice, that, judging from the only papers which now remain, it does not appear that Nau or Curle were ever shewn the original of Mary's letter in cipher to Babington, or the true deciphered copy of it; but merely an abstract of the principal points in it, so made up as to render it doubtful whether they included the guilty passages which Mary so solemnly affirmed were not dictated or written by her.¹ It is true, indeed, that in the State-paper Office, and in the British Museum also, there are preserved copies of Mary's letter to Babington, with the *copy* of an attestation, signed by Curle and Nau; —but in what terms is it given? Do they verify, on oath, that this is a true copy of the letter written by them from Mary's dictation, and sent to Babington? Far from it. Nau simply says, he truly thinks, to the best of his recollection, this is the letter; and Curle, that it was either this letter, or one like it, that he put in cipher.² And it was written by herself, in their hands. But next day, September 4, Walsingham, in a letter to Phelipps, State-paper Office, says, “*the minute of her answer is not extant;*” and on the 7th September, these alleged minutes and letter of Mary's were still wanting; for Waad writes to Phelipps to search anew for them. (State-paper Office, Waad to Phelipps, 7th September 1586.) I have discovered no proof that they were ever found.

¹ Lingard, History of England, vol. viii. pp. 220, 221; and Appendix, pp. 436, 437.

² “*Je pense de v'ray que c'est la lettre escripte par sa Majeste a Babington, comme il me souvenit.—Ainsi signé.*

“*Nau.*”

on such an attestation as this that Burghley contended that the Scottish queen was guilty?

4. There was yet one other way in which the defects of the proof against Mary might have been supplied. If Walsingham and Burghley could not produce the original of her letter to Babington—if they had no minutes of this letter in her own handwriting—they still had Phelipps, who had deciphered it, and who could have attested on oath the accuracy of his own decipher, and its agreement with the copy produced at the trial. Why was this man not produced? Can the motive be doubted?

There are three original papers preserved in the State-paper Office, which appear to me to establish Mary's innocence, on as convincing grounds as the question admits of. It has been already noticed, that when Nau affirmed that the greater part of Mary's letter to Babington was taken by him from an original in the queen's hand, and that this minute of her answer would be found in her repositories, a strict search was made, which was wholly unsuccessful; and on the 4th September Walsingham became convinced that “*the minute was not extant.*” This failure of obtaining proof against Mary threw Walsingham into great perplexity, in the midst of which he wrote this letter to Phelipps:—

WALSINGHAM TO PHELIPPS.

“This morning I received the enclosed from Francis Milles; and this afternoon he made report unto me of his proceeding with Curle accordingly as is set down in the enclosed; by the which you may perceive that Curle doth both testify the receipt of Babington's letters, as also the queen his mistress's answer to the same, wherein he chargeth Nau to have been a principal instrument. I took upon me to put him in comfort of favour, in case he would deal plainly; being moved thereto for that the minute of her answer is not extant, and that I saw Nau resolved to confess no more than

“*Telle ou semblable me semble avoir este la réponse escripte en François par Mons^r. Nau, laquelle j'ay traduit, et mis en chifre, comme j'en fais mention au pied d'une copie de lettre de Mr Babington, laquelle Mons^r Nau a signé le premier.—Ainsi signé.*

“*GILBERT CURLE.*”

“5th September 1586.”

we were able of ourselves to charge him withal.

" If it might please her majesty, upon Curle's plain dealing, and in respect of the comfort I have put him in to receive grace for the same, to extend some extraordinary favour towards him, considering that he is a stranger, and that which he did was by his mistress's commandment, I conceive great hope there might be things drawn from him worthy of her majesty's knowledge; for which purpose I can be content to retain him still prisoner with me, if her majesty shall allow of it.

" I pray you therefore procure some access unto her majesty, that you may know her pleasure therein, with as convenient speed as you may. And so God keep you. From Barnelme, the 4th September 1586.¹

" FR. WALSINGHAM."

This letter proves that no minutes in Mary's handwriting, connecting her with the letter to Babington, had then (4th September) been found; that Nau had confessed nothing that implicated her; and that all Walsingham's hopes rested on bribing Curle, by some "extraordinary favour," to make further disclosures.

In these difficulties, it seems to have struck Phelipps, that Curle and Nau might be intimidated into confessing something against Mary, by shewing them that they had already, by their written declarations, confessed enough against themselves to involve a charge of treason, as abettors of the plot for the invasion of England, and the escape of the Scottish queen. The idea of Phelipps was, to say to these secretaries of the Queen of Scots—" We have already enough against you to hang you; but be more explicit: tell us something which may connect your mistress with Babington's designs against Elizabeth's life, and you shall receive 'some extraordinary favour.'" For this purpose Phelipps, on the 4th September, the very day on which Walsingham wrote the above letter, drew up some remarks, which he sent to Burghley, who has endorsed them "From Phelipps." This paper is entitled, "An Extract of the points contained in the minutes written by Nau and Curle, arguing their privity to the enterprise of the Catholics, and their

mistress's plot,"—4th September 1586. The reader must pardon its abrupt and unfinished state, remembering that this makes it more authentic. It has been carefully read and marked by Burghley, and is as follows:—

" Nau and Curle are charged to be privy and partakers of the conspiracy made by the Papists for the invasion and a rebellion within the realm; as also of a plot laid by their mistress, and sent by her unto the said Papists, with direction for execution of their enterprise, by the minutes of the letters sent to divers persons following, which they have confessed to be their own hands:—

" Nau. K. The letter K, written from the Scottish Q. to Charles Paget, 27th July, being Nau his hand, hath these express words beginning at the letter K, *Sur le retour de Hallard, &c.* In English thus:—'Upon the return of Ballard into this country, the principal Catholics which had despatched him unto that side for want of intelligence with me, have imparted unto me their intentions conform to that which you wrote thereof; but more particularly demanding my directions for the execution of the whole. I have made them a very ample despatch, containing point by point my advice touching all things requisite, as well on this side the sea as on that, to bring to pass their design,' &c.

" The same written in English by Curle, the letter marked D.

" Nau. L. The letter marked L, written from the Scottish Q. to the B. of Glasgow, 27th July, being Nau his hand, containeth a direction unto the said B. to renew the practices with the King of Spain and the Pope, for reformation (as she terms it) of this island—an advice to raise some contrary faction in Scotland to that of England, to disturb the quiet of this isle—she assureth that the principal Catholics of England were never better disposed than at this present, being resolute to set upon the rest. Wills him to know of her cousin the D. of Guise, if, the peace being made in France, he may not employ himself in this action with the forces which, without suspicion, he may have in readiness by that mean, &c.

" F. The letter F, written by the Scottish queen to Mendoza, 27th July, being Nau his hand, containeth, in express terms, that upon intelligence of

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Papers of Mary Queen of Scots.

the K. of Spain's good intention in these quarters, she hath written very amply to the principal Catholics, touching a design which he hath sent them, with his advice upon every point, to resolve upon the execution thereof. And particularly that she hath sent unto them to despatch one in all diligence unto him, sufficiently instructed to treat with him according to the general offers that had been made him of all things to be required on the behalf of his master. She wills him to give the bearer credit, which shall be sent from the Catholics, as to herself. The said deputy of the Catholics, she saith, shall inform him of the means of her escape, &c.

"*Curle.*¹ O. The letter marked O, written by the Q. of Scots to the L. Paget, 27th July, with Curle's hand, argueth an overture made by the Catholics of this realm to the Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, which she says she thinks his brother hath acquainted him with: she saith she hath written very amply to the principal of the said Catholics, for to have, upon a plot which she hath dressed for them, their common resolution; and for to treat accordingly with the K. of Spain, she hath addressed them unto him; and she prays him to consider deeply of the said plot, and all the particularities for the execution thereof—namely, for the support, both men, armour, munition, and money, which is to be had of the Pope, and King of Spain.

"There is a minute of the same in French, under Nau his hand.

"*Curle.*¹ E. The letter marked E, written by the Scottish Q. to Sir Francis Englefield, 27th July, of Curle's hand, containeth the same in effect also."²

In the above summary of proofs against the Queen of Scots and her two secretaries, drawn up by Phelipps, and evidently founded on *all* the original letters which had been then recovered, and with which either Nau or Curle could be connected, there is not, it will be seen, the slightest proof of Mary's participation in Babington's plot against Elizabeth's life: nor does there appear to have been anything in these letters, written by her secretaries, connecting her or them with such a design. The

plot related entirely, as is shewn by these proofs, to the Spanish invasion of England, and the plans drawn up by Mary for her escape, to which she pleaded guilty.

This defect appears to have struck Burghley, and Phelipps endeavoured to supply it by drawing up for this statesman a second SUMMARY, endorsed by Burghley, "*From Phelipps,*" and dated on the same day as the former, 4th Sept. 1586. This paper appears to me, from its admissions and omissions, to be almost conclusive in establishing the innocence of Mary. It is entitled, "Arguments of Nau and Curle's privity to the whole conspiracy, as well of invasion as rebellion, and murder of the queen's person," and is as follows:—

"Their privity to that was written by their mistress touching the two former points both to Mendoza, the L. Paget, Charles Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, and the B. of Glasgow, in the letters of the 27th July, thus marked—F, O, K, D, E, L; which minutes are of their own hands, as themselves confess, *the like trust not unlike to be given for writing those to Babington.*

"The first letter written by that queen unto Babington, as it seemeth, since his intelligence was renewed, being of the 26th June, is of Curle's hand, (litera B;) and the secret intelligencer, Barnaby,³ is directed by Curle's letter where to find Babington, litera B.

"The second letter, likewise coming from Nau to Babington, touching their assurance of Poley, is of Curle's hand, (litera P;) and it argueth a letter sent in cipher from Babington, which Curle, or the inditer thereof, was to decipher, which was Nau. In the same letter Curle taketh order that)-(shall stand for Babington's name.

"Litera A sheweth that there was another letter in cipher sent to Babington by the secret messenger, 27th July, which Babington shall confess to be the bloody letter. The letters to Babington, and from Babington, two of them, were very long, and all in cipher, fair written, (as Babington will confess;) and therefore it cannot choose but that the queen's letter was put in cipher by Nau or Curle, and Babington's letter likewise deciphered.

¹ This word, Curle, on the margin, is in Burghley's hand.

² MS., State-paper Office, Papers of Mary Queen of Scots.

³ Barnaby is a name for Gilbert Gifford. "Curle's Letter," 19th June; State-paper Office, in which he says "f" stands also for Arnaby, or Gilbert Gifford."

"The new alphabet sent to be used in time to come between that queen and Babington, accompanying the bloody despatch, is of Nau's hand.

"The heads of that bloody letter sent to Babington, touching the designment of the queen's person, [by this he means the plot to assassinate Elizabeth,] is of Nau's hand likewise.

"They cannot any way say it should stand with reason that the queen did decipher, and put in cipher, her letters herself : for it appeareth that she despatched ordinarily more packets every fortnight than it was possible for one body well exercised therein to put in cipher, and decipher those sent ; much less for her, being diseased, a queen, &c.

"It appeareth all letters were addressed to one of them, Nau or Curle ; for that in the deciphering there is, for the most part, a postscript found to them—excusing sometimes the error or length of the cipher, sometimes of their private occasions," &c.

Such is this second "Summary." Now it will be noted that Phelipps argues thus : The letters of Mary to Mendoza, Lord Paget, and others, marked F, O, K, D, E, L, were written from minutes drawn up by Curle and Nau from Mary's dictation. It is, therefore, to be presumed that a similar trust would be given them for writing the letters to Babington. Is there not here an express admission by Phelipps, that there was no proof that Mary had given any instructions whatever to her secretaries, which connected her with the alleged letter to Babington produced on her trial.—He presumes that she may have given instructions for Babington's letter, because she gave such instructions for the letters to Mendoza, Paget, and the rest.

But there is a still more important fact stated by Phelipps in this second "Summary." The heads of the bloody letter to Babington had, it appears, been found, although the *minutes* of this same letter, which Nau affirmed to have been given him by the queen in her own handwriting, had not been found. And these heads, let it be observed, were in the handwriting of Nau himself, not of Mary.

It is therefore evident that the utmost exertions, and the strictest search on the part of Mary's enemies, directed by all the skill and vigour of Walsingham, and carried into effect by the unscrupulous artifices and ingenuity of

Phelipps, had not been able to find the smallest scrap of evidence under Mary's hand which could connect her with the plot against Queen Elizabeth's life. Last of all, we have in this "Summary," the admission that *all* the letters (which includes Babington's among the rest) were addressed, not to Mary, but either to Nau or Curle—that Mary relied on Nau and Curle to decipher them—and that the queen's alleged letter to Babington was put in cipher either by Nau or Curle. If, then, (to sum up these proofs,) Babington's alleged letter was not addressed to Mary—if she had nothing to do with deciphering it—if the alleged answer in cipher was not made by her—if there were no minutes in her hand for that answer—if Nau and Curle's declarations do not connect her with the plot against the queen's life—and if Phelipps, whose evidence under such a lack of proof could alone have supplied the deficiency, was not brought forward—it appears difficult to resist the conclusion, that Mary was implicated solely in a plot for her escape, that she was entirely ignorant of the project for Elizabeth's assassination, and that she was the victim of forged letters manufactured by her enemies.¹ It would be easy to corroborate this conclusion by some additional arguments, drawn from the successive declarations of Nau, and other letters or papers preserved in the British Museum and State-paper Office : but enough has been said upon the point; and any reader who wishes to pursue the inquiry, will find ample materials in these two noble repositories of original information. He will there find the lists, notes, and arguments which Lord Burghley drew up previous to the trial of the Scottish queen—upon which I cannot enter ; but the whole have been examined and carefully weighed, and the result is, a confirmation of the opinion of Mary's innocence.

¹ In the British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 458, there is a confession of Thomas Harrison, who styles himself Secretary to Sir Francis Walsingham, in which he states that Walsingham, Phelipps, and himself contrived the conspiracy, and forged the letters, for which Mary suffered death. I have not given this confession, because I know one part of it to be false, and dare not trust the rest.

No. XV., page 155.

Queen Mary's Beads.

My friend, Mr Howard of Corby castle, has in his possession a pair of golden beads, with a gold crucifix attached to them, ornamented with drop pearls. These beads belonged to the late Charles, duke of Norfolk, and were part of the collection of Thomas, earl of Arundel : the tradition in that noble family being, that they were worn by the unfortunate Mary at the time of her death, and sent by her, as a last token of affection, to the then Earl or Countess of Arundel.

No. XVI., page 169.

Huntly's Rebellion with Errol, Angus, and Bothwell.

On the 16th March 1588-9, Elizabeth sent the following private letter to James, remonstrating with him against his misplaced lenity to Huntly and the Catholic faction. It was delivered to the king by the English resident Ashby, on the 21st March, as we learn by the following passage from that gentleman's letter to Lord Burghley¹:-

"The 21, early in the morning, I received a letter from your Honour, with the enclosed of her majesty's; which I presented to him that day." Ashby afterwards tells us the king liked the queen's letter, and meant to prosecute the matter against the Catholic lords with severity. As to the Spaniards, against whose stay in Scotland Elizabeth so proudly remonstrated, calling them "the spoils of her wreck," the same gentleman writes Burghley, "that it is thought as many as a thousand are dispersed over Scotland; and how they are to be transported, unless her majesty go to charges, he cannot tell." This fact is new.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES.²

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am driven, through the greatness of my care for your safe estate, to complain to yourself of yourself; wondering not a little what injurious planet against my nearest neighbours reigneth with such blindness, and suffereth them not to see their changing peril and most imminent danger. Shall I excuse them they know it not? I am too true a witness that ignorance cannot excuse,

as having been a most near spy to find out those treacheries. Must I say they dare not? Far be it from kingly magnanimity to harbour within their breast so unseemly a guest. Have I no excuse to serve them for payment? Well, then must I wail that I cannot mend; and if there befall them mishap, I am not guilty of such disaster. Yet can I not desist, though I might be discouraged, to beseech you in God's name not to overstep such happy occasions as it hath pleased God to reveal unto you: for if, when they be at your side, you will not make yourself a profit of their wreck, how will you catch them when they are aloof from you?

"Let too late examples shew you for pattern, how dishonourable it is to prolong to do by right, that [which] after they are driven to do by extremity; yea, and perchance as being taught to take heed, they will shun the place of danger; and so your danger worse than the others.

"It had been for honour and surety never to have touched, than so slightly to keep them in a scorn in durance, to be honoured with your presence with all kindness, and soon after to be extolled to your dearest chamber. Good L^d! what uncouth and never-heard-of trade is that? You must pardon my plain dealing: for if my love were not greater than my cause, as you treat it, I should content myself to see them wrecked with dishonour that contemn all loving warning and sister-like counsel. I pray God there be left you time (you have dealt so untimely) to be able to apprehend and touch such as dares boldly, through your sufferance, attempt anything they list, to bring you and your land to the slavery of such as never yet spared their own. I know not how gracious they will be to you and your realm. When they get footing, they will suffer few feet but their own. Awake, therefore, dear brother, out of your long slumber! and deal like a king who will ever reign alone in his own. If they found you stout, you should not lack that would follow you, and leave rotten posts.

"I marvel at the store you make of the Spaniards being the spoils of my wreck. You wrote me word not one should bide with you; and now they must attend for more company. I am sorry to see how small regard you have of so great a cause. I may claim by treaty that such should not be; but I

¹ State-Paper Office.

² Warrender MSS., vol. A, p. 196.

hope, without such claim, (seeing your home practices,) you will quickly rid your realm of them with speed ; which I do expect for your own sake, and not the least for mine ; of whom you may make sure reckoning (if you abandon not yourself) to be protected by forever.

" And thus I end with axing a right interpretation of my plain and sincere meaning ; and wish ever to you as to myself ; as knoweth the Lord, whom ever I beseech to preserve you with long and happy days. xvi. Martii, 1588. " ELIZABETH R."

Endorsed, Copie of a letter from the Queen, 1588.

No. XVII., page 177.

It appears by a letter of Mr R. Bowes, the English ambassador at the Scottish court, to Lord Burghley, dated at Edinburgh, 4th June 1590, that on the 3d June he received the following letter of Elizabeth to James, and presented it next day (the 4th) to the King of Scots. " He received," says Bowes, " her majesty's letter very friendly ; shewing himself much pleased and comforted therewith." The person against whom Elizabeth had remonstrated, deprecating his being sent on so weighty and confidential a business, was Colonel Stewart, whom she suspected, on account of his former desertion of the Protestant party.

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO KING JAMES.¹

" My conceit, I perceive, my dear brother, hath no whit swerved from your good intent : for now I well see Colonel Steward's negotiation was not framed of his own brain, but proceeded from your earnest affection to so laudable a cause ; and by your last letters, I find your earnest motion made to the two dukes, together with their good and loving consent.

" All this moveth me to find you a redevable² prince to a careful friend ; and [I] do praise my judgment to have chosen so grateful a king, on whom to spend so many careful thoughts, as since your peregrination I have felt for your surety and your land's wealth : and as my thanks are manifold, so shall the memorial bide perpetual.

" And for the Action, at the arrival

¹ MS., State-paper Office, Royal Letters, May 29, 1590.

² " Redeable," Fr., beholden to ; grateful.

of such a one as you are sending me, I will at large impart plainly my resolution therein ; and considering it not your least regard of me, that you be heedful to deal no other ways than as may best content me. And [I] do assure you, that as I will never myself enter into it the first, yet I will ask nothing that shall not fit a king to demand, nor plead more innocency in all the cause, than my guiltless conscience, well shewed by my actions, shall ever testify. And so you may be assured to get most honour, and never blot your fame with dealing in an action, when so great injury shall appear, and no just cause to enforce it.

" That I perceive the governors of Denmark like well that other princes of Germany should send their good consent, with joining their message, I must needs say, ' the more the better ' that desire such thing as is best for all Christendom ; although I had thought that you, with the King of Denmark, would have sufficed. Yet, if the rest do make the knot the greater, I must think my bond to them the more, and trust the pact will be the surer.

" In the choice of such as you mind to send, this I hope you will chiefly regard : that he be none such as whose own cause or affection to the adverse part may breed a doubt of performance of the sender's will ; but be chosen even such a one, as whose honest and wise endeavour may much advance the end of so good a beginning.

" My good brother, I write this the plainer that you might clearly see what one I wish, and that may suffice for all. And for that the time requireth speed, I doubt not but you will use it.

" And so I leave scribbling, but never end to love you, and assist you with my friendship, care, and prayer to the living God to send you all prosperous success, and His Holy Spirit for guide.

" Your most assured faithful Sister and Cousin."

Endorsed, 29th May 1590. Copy of her majesty's letter, written with her own hand to the King of Scots, sent to Mr Bowes.

No. XVIII.

The following letter, written by Elizabeth to Henry the Fourth, at the time that she sent her favourite Essex with four thousand men to his assistance, is highly characteristic. It is taken from a contemporary copy preserved in the

Collection of Royal Letters in the State-paper Office. See Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. pp. 562, 563.

ELIZABETH TO HENRY IV., July 27,
1591.

" Selon la promesse que toujours je garderay endroit, très cher frere, je vous mande l'aide de 4000 hommes, avec un Lieutenant qui comme il m'appertient de bien près, aussy est-il de telle qualité, et tient tel lieu chez moy, que de costume ne se souloit esloigner q'avec nous. Mais toutes ces raisons j'ay oublié les proposant toutes a votre occasion, preffrant vostre nécessité et désir, à mes particulières considerations. A laquelle cause je ne doute nullement que vous y respondiez, avec un honorable et soigneur respect de vostre grandeur, a luy faire l'accueil et regard que tant d'amitié merite : vous pouvant assurer, que si (que plus je craigne) la temerité que sa jeunesse luy donne, ne se fait trop se precipiter, vous n'aurez jamais cause de doubter de la hardiesse de son service, car il n'a fait que trop souvent preuve qu'il ne craint hazard quelque qui soit. Et vous suppliant d'en avoir plus-tost de respect, qu'il est trop effroné q'on luy donne la bride.

" Mais, mon Dieu, comment reve-je, pour vous faire si déraisonnable requeste; que vous voyant tant tarder à vous conserver la vie, je fus si mal appris de respecter une plus simple creature. Seulement je vous prononce qu'il aura plus besoin de bride que d'esperon. Et non obstant j'espère que vous le trouverez assez habile pour conduire ses troupes à vous faire service tres agreable. Et j'ose promettre, que nos sujets y sont de s'y bonne dispositions et ont les coeurs si vaillants qu'ils vous feront services qui vous ruineront beaucoup le ennemy si leur bonne fortune respondra à leurs desirs. Et pour salaire de toutes ces Compagnies jc vous demande ces deux requestes: la premiere, que leur vie et sang vous soyent si à cœur que rien soit omis pour leur regard ainsi qu'ils soyent cheris comme qui servent, non comme mercenaires, mais franchement, de bonne affection. Aussi qu'ils ne portent le faits de trop violents hazards n'y de n're [n'etre] bien au double accompagnés et secondés. Vous etes si sage Prince, que m'assure que n'oubliez que nos deux nations n'ont trop souvent si bien accordés, qu'ils ne se souviennent de vielles discordances, ne se pensent de même terre. mais

separés d'une profonde fossée. Et pourtant y tiendrez sy bien la main, que nul inconvenientleur arrive. Ayant de ma part bien instruits nos gens d'assez bonnes leçons, lesquelles je m'assure qu'ils observeront. Et pour ne vous fatiguer de longue lettre, je finiray cet adresse, le seul memorial qu'en vous approchant près de nos quartiers, vous n'oublier de boucher chemin a Parma, de toutes parts au il doit entrer. Car je m'assuere, qu'il à receu commandement d'omettre plutot les pays-bas que la France.

" Vostre très asseurée bonne sœur et
cousine,

" E. R."

No. XIX.

The following striking and characteristic letter of Elizabeth to the Scottish king, written with her own hand, was received by Bowes, accompanied by two letters of the 14th and 17th of the same month, from Lord Burghley. James was then at Dumbarton, in progress, whither the English ambassador proceeded; and (as he informs the lord treasurer in his letter from Edinburgh, dated 27th August,) "delivered her majesty's letter, accompanying the delivery thereof with report of your lordship's opinion in the weighty contents flowing suddenly from her majesty's pen in your lordship's sight." "The king," continues Bowes, "oftentimes perused and gravely noted the frame and substance of this letter; and with pleasant countenance and signs, well declaring his good acceptance, he entered into right high commendation of the excellent order, singular wisdom, and rare friendship that he found therein."

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO THE KING OF SCOTS, August 12, 1591.

" Many make the argument of their letters of divers subjects: some with salutations; some with admonitions, others with thanks: but, my dear brother, few, I suppose, with confession; and that at this time shall serve the meetest for my part.

" I doubt not but you wonder why it is, that in time so perilous to your person, so dangerous for your state, so hateful to the hearers, so strange for the treasons, you find me, that from your birth held most in regard your surely, should now neglect all, when it most behoveth to have watchful eyes on

a most needy prince. Now hear there-of my shrift :—It is true that my many counsels I have known oft thanked, but seldom followed. When I wished you reign, you suffered other rule : if I desired awe, you gave them liberty. My timely warnings became too late performance. When it required action, it was all to begin ; which when I gathered, as in a handful of my memory, I will now try, quoth I, what, at a pinch, he will do for himself ; for nearer than with life may no man be assailed. And hearing how audacity prevailed in so large measure, as it was made a question whether a witch for a king's life might serve for a sufficient proof, and that the price of a king's blood was set at so low a rate, with many wondering blessings I, in attentive sort, attended the issue of such an error ; and not seeing any great offence laid to so slight a case, I fearfully doubted the consequence of such an act ; yea, when I heard that, quakingly, men hasted to trial of such guilt, I supposed the more loved where least it became, and the most neglected to whom they owed most bond.

" Well [I] was assured, that more addition could never my warning make ; and to renew what so oft was told, should be but *petitio principii*. With safe conscience having discharged my office, I betook you to your best actions, and thought for me there was no more remaining. And now I trust that this may merit an absolution, I will make you partaker of my joy, that I hear you now begin (which would to God had sooner been!) to regard your surety, and make men fear you, and leave adoring false saints. God strengthen your kingly heart, and make you never fail yourself ; for then who will stick to you ? You know me so well as no bloody mind ever lodged in my breast : and hate bear I none to any of yours, God is witness. But ere your days be shortened, let all yours be. This my charity."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office,
August 12, 1591. Endorsed, Copy
of her Majesty's letter to the K.
of Scots. Written with her H.
hand.

No. XX.

This indignant and characteristic letter of Elizabeth was written to express her deep resentment of the man-

ner in which Henry had treated her auxiliary force sent under the command of Essex. Camden, p. 563.

ELIZABETH TO HENRY IV., November 9, 1591.

" Ma plume, ne toucha jamais papier, qui se fits sujet à argument si étrange, pour montrer ung nouvel accident d'une mal injuriée amitié, par tel a qui le seul appuy, a estre ministré par la partie la plus offensée. De nos ennemis, nous n'attendions que tout malencontre : Et siaultant nous presten les amis, qu'ell difference en trouvons nous ? Je m'estonne, qu'il est possible que celuy qui tient tant de besoing d'aide, paye en si mauvaise monnoye ses plus asseurés. Pouvez vous imaginer, que mon sexe m'aridit le courage pour ne me ressentir d'ung public affront. Le sang royal, si j'en ay, ne l'endureroit du plus puissant Prince en la Chretienneté, tel traistement, qu'en ces trois mois vous m'avez presté. Ne vous desplaissé que je vous dise rondelement, que si ainsi vous traister vos amis, qui librement de bonne effects vous servent en temps le plus important, vous en faillerez doresnavant, en vos plus grands besoings. Et j'eusse présentement revoqué mes troupes n'eust été que votre ruine me semble se présenter, si par mon exemple les autres, doutants de semblable traitemment, vous delaissent. Ce qui me pour quelque peu de tems [fait] prolonger leur demeure, me rougissant que je suis faict spectacle du monde de Princesse meprisée, Pariant le Createur vous inspirer meilleur mode de conserver vos amis.

" Vtre sœur qui plus merite qu'elle n'a,
" E. R."

No. XXI.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, November 25,
1591.

" As my care for your weal, my dear brother, hath been full long the desire of my endeavours, so though my many letters do not oft cumber your eyes with the reading them, yet my ever-living watchful head hath never been neglected ; as by proof, even now, the errand that this bearer brings you, may make you know ; which being even that nearly doth touch your surety and state, I conjure you, even for the worth that you prize yourself at, that you

*forslowe*¹ not (after your usual manner) this matter, as you too much, ere now, have done suchlike : and ever remember, that the next step to overturn a royal seat, is to make the subject know, that whatever he doth may be either coloured or neglected ; of which either breeds boldness to shun the pain, whatsoever the offence deserves. Far better it were, that all pretence of cause be bebarred, than threaten, ere one strike and so the prey escape. Shun in the handling of my overtur [speaking] of what is meant; but after wise resolution of what behoves, let few or, if possible, none know, afore that be ended which is thought to be done. This is, in short, my advice ; as she that too plainly sees, that if you defer, you may fortune repent. Yea, and you trust too much some, that can have many cords to their bow ; these may, perhaps, overthrow the mark, or you hit the blank. Excuse my plainness, and let good-will plead my pardon. God bless you.

" Yo^r most assured Sister,
" ELIZABETH R."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office.
Endorsed, November 25, 1591.
Copie of her Ma^{ties} Lre to the K.
of Scots, by Mr Hudson.

XXII.

A short sentence of the following letter from Elizabeth to James has been already given in the text, (p. 188;) but the whole epistle, which is preserved in Sir George Warrender's MSS., and written wholly in the queen's own hand, is too characteristic to be omitted. I have, generally, in Queen Elizabeth's letters, modernised the spelling ; this, for the reader's amusement, I give in her own peculiar orthography :—

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO KING JAMES,
December 4, 1592.

" MY DEAR BROTHER,—If the misfortune of the messenger had not protracted so longe the riciate of my lettars, I had sonar receved the knowlege of such matter, as wold have cried my sonar answer to causes of suche importance ; but at length, thought longe :

" First, I perceave how to the privy snaris of your seeming friends, yow have so warily cast your yees as that your [mind] hath not been trapped with the

¹ To forslove ; to omit, or lose by deferring.

fals shewis of such a kindness ; but have wel remembred, that proved cares and assured love aught, of mere justice, tafe [to have] the upperhand of begiling de-baits and coulored treasons.

" Yow forget not, I percaive, how yow should have served ons [once] for prey to enter the hands of a foreaner's rule, even by the intisement of him, that offars you that he cannot get ; wiche if he ever [got] should serve his trofe, not yours, whose land he seakes but to thrale both. Hit glads me much, that yow have more larger sight than the [they] supposed that wold have limed you so. And for my part, I render my many thankis to your selfe for your selfe, as she that skornis his malice, and eanvies not his intent.

" My enemy can never do himself more skar, than to wil my giltles wrack, who or now, himself knowes, hath preserved him his countryes, who since hath sought mine. Suche was his reward. God ever shild you from so crouked a wil as to hazard your own, in hope of saiving another.

" You know right wel, ther is a way to get, that doth precede the attempt. Whan he hath won the entry, you shal have lest part of the victory, who sekess to make (as oft hath bin) your subjects theirs. Suppose, I beseeche you, how easely he wyl present yow the best, and kepe the worst for him. This matter is so plain, hit nedes smal advis.

" Preserve yourselfe in such state as you have. For others begile not your selfe, that injuriously you may get. There is more to do in that than *wiles and witches*. Look about with fixed yees, and sure suche to yow, as sekess not more yours than you. Draw not such as hange their hopes on other stringes than you may tune. Them that gold can corrupt, thinke not your gifts can assure. Who ons have made shipwrack of ther country, let them never injoy hit. Wede out the wedes, lest the best corn festar. Never arm with powere suche whos bettarnis must folowe *after* you ; nor trust not to ther trust, that, undar any coular, wyl tral [thrall] their own soile.

" I may not, nor wol conciel, overtures that of late hath ful amply bene made me, how you may playnly knowe all the combinars aganist your state ; and how yow may intrap them, and so assure your kingdем ; but not presenting [permitting] hit a spoile to st coursty, one or more of

ther owne—is this actor, and therefore [know you] best in whiche he standeth to your¹. Wither if this be, he may deserue surty of life, or of land, nor livehode; but suchē as may praserve brethe to spend whan best shal please you.² My answer was, whan I se the way how, I wil im- part hit to whom hit most apartanis.

"Now bethink, my deare brother, what furdar yow wyl have me do. In meanwhile, beware to give the raines into the hands of any, lest hit be to late to revoke suchē actions done. Let no one of the Spanishe faction in your absence, yea, whan you were present, receave strengt or countenance. Yow knowe,

but for you, al of them to be alike to me for my particular; yet I may not deny but I abhorre suche as sets their country to sale. And thus committing yow to God's tuition, I shal remain the faithful holdar of my vowed amitie without spot or wrinkel.

"Your affectionat Sistar and Cousin,

"ELIZABETH."

This letter is directed "To our dearest Brother the King of Scots." It is endorsed in a small hand of the time, "Delivered be Mr Bowes, 4th Decem. 1592." See Historie of James the Sext, p. 261.

No. XXIII., p. 191.

The Present State of the Nobility in Scotland. July 1, 1592.³

<i>Earls.</i>	<i>Surnames.</i>	<i>Religion.</i>	<i>Ages.</i>
Duke of Lennox	Stewart	Prot.	Of 20 years. His mother, a Frenchwoman. Married the third daughter of the late Earl of Gowrie. She is dead. His house, castle of Methven.
Arran	Hamilton	Prot.	Of about 54 years. His mother, Douglas, daughter to the Earl of Morton, who was earl before James the Regent. His house, Hamilton; and married this Lord Glames' aunt.
Angus	Douglas	Doubt ful	Of 42 years. His mother, Graham, daughter to the Laird of Morphy. Married the eldest daughter of the Lord Oliphant. His house, Tantallon.
Huntly	Seton-Gordon	Papist	Of 33 years. His mother, daughter to Duke Hamilton. Married the now Duke of Lennox's sister. His house, Strabogy.
Argile	Campbell	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, sister to the Earl Marshall, this earl's father. Not yet married. His house, Dynoon.
Athol	Stewart	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, daughter to the Lord Fleming. Married this Earl of Gowrie's sister. His house, Dunkeld.
Murray	Stewart	Young	Of 10 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Murray, Regent, by whom this earl's father (slain by Huntly) had that earldom. Not married. His house, Tarnaway.
Crawford	Lindsay	Papist	Of 35 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl Marshall. Married first the Lord Drummond's daughter, and now the Earl of Athol's sister. His house, Finhaven.
Arrol	Hay	Papist	Of 31 years. His mother, Keith, daughter to the Earl Marshall. Married first the Regent Murray's daughter, next Athol's sister, and now hath to wife Morton's daughter. His house, Slanes.

¹ The original is here torn and illegible.

² This sentence is evidently imperfect; but so it runs in the original.

³ MS., State-paper Office. There is also a copy in British Museum, Caligula, D II. 80.

<i>Earls.</i>	<i>Surnames.</i>	<i>Religion.</i>	<i>Ages.</i>
Morton	Douglas	Prot.	Of 66 years. His mother, Erskine, daughter of the Lord Erskine. Married to the sister of the Earl of Rothes. His house, Dalkeith.
Marshall	Keith	Prot.	Of 38 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Errol. Married this Lord Hume's sister. His house, Dunotter.
Cassillis	Kennedy	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, Lyon, aunt to this Lord Glames, and who now is the Lord John Hamilton's wife. Not married.
Eglinton	Montgomery	Young	Of 8 years. His mother, Kennedy, daughter to the Laird of Barganie. Unmarried.
Glencairn	Cunningham	Prot.	Of 40 years. His mother, Gordon of Lochinvar. Married the Laird of Glenurchy's daughter, Gordon. His house, Glencairn.
Montrose	Graham	Papist	Of 49 years. His mother, daughter of the Lord Fleming. Married the Lord Drummond's sister. Auld Montrose, in Angus.
Menteith	Graham	Young	Of 19 years. His mother, daughter to the old Laird of Drumlanrig. Married to Glenurchy's daughter. Kylbride.
Rothes	Lesly	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Somerville. Married first the sister of Sir James Hamilton, and then the sister of the Lord Ruthven. Castle of Lesly.
Caithness	Sinclar	Neut.	Of 26 years. His mother, Hepburn, sister to Bothwell that died in Denmark. Married this Huntly's sister. Tungesby.
Sutherland	Gordon	Neut.	Of 36 years. His mother, sister to the Regent Earl of Lennox. Married the Earl of Huntly's sister, this earl's aunt. His house, Dunrobyn.
Bothwell	Stewart	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, Hepburn, sister to the late Earl Bothwell. Married the sister of Archibald Earl of Angus. He stands now forfeited. Crichton.
Buchan	Douglas	Young	Of 11 years. His mother, Stewart, heretrix of Buchan. Unmarried.
Mar	Erskine	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, Murray, sister to the Laird of Tullybarden. A widower. His house, Alloway.
Orkney	Stewart	Neut.	Of 63 years. Base son of King James the Fifth. His mother, Elphinstone. Married to the Earl of Cassillis' daughter.
Goury	Ruthven	Young	Of 15 years. His mother, sister to umquhile Lord Methven. Unmarried. Ruthven.

<i>Lords.</i>	<i>Surnames.</i>	<i>Religion.</i>	<i>Ages.</i>
Lyndsay	Lyndsay	Prot.	Of 38 years. His mother, sister to the Laird of Lochleven. Married the Earl of Rothes' daughter. His house, Byers.
Seaton	Seaton	Papist	5 Of 40 years. His mother, daughter to Sir Wm. Hamilton. His wife is Montgomery, the earl's aunt. His house, Seaton.
Borthwick	Borthwick	Prot.	Of 22 years. His mother, daughter of Bucleuch. His wife, the Lord Yester's daughter. Borthwick.
Yester	Hay	Prot.	Of 28 years. His mother, Car of Fernyhurst. His wife, daughter of the L. of Newbottle. Neidpath.
Levingston	Levingston	Papist	6 Of 61 years. His mother, daughter of umquhile Earl of Morton. His wife, the Lord Fleming's sister. Calendar.

<i>Lords.</i>	<i>Surnames.</i>	<i>Religion.</i>	<i>Ages.</i>
Elphinstone	Elphinstone	Neut.	Of 63 years. His mother, Erskine. His wife, the daughter of Sir John Drummond. Elphinstone.
Boyd	Boyd	Prot.	Of 46 years. His mother, Colquhoun. His wife, the Sheriff of Ayr's daughter. Kilmer nok.
Semple	Semple	Prot.	Of 29 years. His mother, Preston. His wife, daughter of the Earl of Eglinton. Semple.
Ross	Ross	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, the Lord Semplis' daughter. His wife, Gavin Hamilton's daughter.
Uchiltree	Stewart	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, sister to the Lord Methven. His wife, Kennedy, the daughter of the Laird of Blawquhen. Uchiltree.
Cathcart	Cathcart	Prot.	Of 55 years. His mother, Semple. His wife, Wallace, daughter of the Laird of Cragy-Wallace. Catheart.
Maxwell	Maxwell	Papist	Of 41 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Morton that preceded the Regent. His wife, Douglas, sister to the Earl of Angus.
Harris	Maxwell	Papist	Of 37 years. His mother, Harris, by whom he had the lordship. His wife is the sister of Newbottle. His house, Terrègles.
Sanquhar	Crichton	Papist	Of 24 years. His mother, daughter of Drumlanrig. Unmarried. His house, Sanquhar.
Somervill	Somervill	Prot.	Of 45 years. His mother, sister to Sir James Hamilton. His wife, sister to the Lord Seaton. Carnwath.
Drummond	Drummond	Prot.	Of 40 years. His mother, daughter to the Lord Ruthven. His wife, Lyndsay, daughter of the Laird of Edzell. Drummond.
Oliphant	Oliphant	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Sandieands. His wife is Errol's sister. Duppline.
Gray	Gray	Papist	Of 54 years. His mother, the Lord Ogilvy's daughter. His wife, the Lord Ruthven's sister. Fowlis.
Glames	Lyon	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, sister to the Lord Saltoun. Unmarried.
Ogilvy	Ogilvy	Papist	Of 51 years. His mother, Campbell of Caddell. His wife, the Lord Forbes's daughter. No castle, but the B. of Brichen's house.
Hume	Hume	Suspect	Of 27 years. His mother, the L. Gray's daughter. His wife, the Earl of Morton's daughter. Hume.
Fleming	Fleming	Papist	Of 25 years. His mother, daughter of the Master of Ross. His wife, the Earl of Montrose's daughter. Bigger.
Innermeith	Stewart	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, the Lord Ogilvy's daughter. His wife, Lyndsay the Laird of Edzell's daughter. Redcastle.
Forbes	Forbes	Prot.	Of 75 years. His mother, Lundie. His wife, Keith.
Salton	Abernethy	Young	Of 14 years. His mother, Athol's sister, this earl's aunt. Saltoun.
Lovat	Fraser	Prot.	Of 23 years. His mother, Stewart, aunt to Athol. His wife, the Laird of M'Kenzie's daughter.
Sinkler	Sinkler	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Oliphant. His wife, the Lord Forbes's daughter. Ravens-Crage.
Torpichen	Sandilands	Young	Of 18 years. His mother, daughter of the Lord Ross. His house, Calder or Torpichen.

Lords. Surnames. Religion. Ages.
Thirlstane Maitland Prot. Of 48 years. Married the Lord Fleming's aunt.
A new house in Lowther or Lethington.

HOUSES DECAYED.

Methven	Stewart	Decayed by want of heirs; and coming to the King's hands, he hath dispossed it to the Duke.
Carlisle	Carlisle	The male heirs are decayed. There is a daughter of the Lord Carlisle's married to James Douglas of the Parkhead, who hath the living, but not the honours.

LORDS OR BARONS CREATED OF LANDS APPERTAINING TO BISHOPRICS AND ABBACIES.

<i>Lords.</i>	<i>Surnames.</i>	<i>Religion.</i>	<i>Ages.</i>
Altrie	Keith	Prot.	Of 63 years. His mother, Keith. His wife, Lauriston. This lordship is founded on the Abbot of Dere.
Newbottle	Kerr	Prot.	Of 39 years. His mother, the Earl of Rothes' sister. His wife, Maxwell [sister] to this Lord Harris. This lordship is founded on the Abbacy of Newbottle. His house, Morphale or Preston-Grange.
Urquhart	Seaton	Papist 13	Of 35 years. The Lord Seaton's brother. His wife, the Lord Drummond's daughter. Founded on the Priory of Pluscardy.
Spinay	Lyndsay	Prot.	Of 28 years. The Earl of Crawford's third brother. His wife, Lyon, the Lord Glamis' daughter. This is founded on the Bishopric of Murray. His house is Spynay. But Huntly is heritable constable in that house.

Endorsed, "Of the Nobility in Scotland." Burghley, who had studied the paper, and marked the names of the Papists, has added, in his own hand, "A Catalogue," the date 1^{mo} Julii 1592; the figures over the Papists' names are also in Burghley's hand.

No. XXI V.

The following letter is taken from the original in the Warrender MSS., written entirely in the queen's own hand:—

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, [probably 1593.]

"When I consider, right dear Brother, that all the chaos whereof this world was made, consisted first of confusion, and was after divided into four principal elements, of which if either do bear too great a superiority, the whole must quickly perish; and when I see that all our beings consist of contrarieties, without the which we may not breathe, I marvel the less that there do fall in your conceit, an opinion, that you could accord with a discord. It is true that, in music, sweet disorders be good rules; but in trades of lives, which

bide not for moments but for years, it seld is taken for good advice: the more, I grant, is their bond, that on so dangerous foundation find a builder to venture his work.

"I will shun to be so wicked, as to turn to scorn that I suppose is grounded on ignorance; neither will I misjudge that any derision is meant, where I hope there reigns no such iniquity: therefore, I will have recourse to my best judgment, which consisteth in this thought,—that some that saw my outward show, looked not on the calends of my years; and so, through fame of seeming appearance, might delude your ears, and make suppose far better than you should find. But as my obligation is so great in your behalf, as it may permit no disguising, no more than in anything else that may concern you will I abuse you

with beguiling persuasions ; and thereon mind to deal with you as merchants that have no ready money : then they fall to consider of those wares that suits best their countries, and by interchange of equal utilities, makes traffic to other's best avail ; procuring a continuance of friendly trade, and true intelligence, of fair good-will ; which is the way I choose to walk in, and even in so smooth a path as my works shall perform my word's errand : and do promise, on the faith of a king, if I find correspondence in your actions, my eyes shall give as narrow a look to what shall be your good, as if it touched the body that bears them. But if I shall find a double face of one shoulder, I protest I shall abandon my care, and leave you to your worst fortune.

"This gentleman, for your allowance and good favour, not for his good-will to me, nor many practices perilous to me, of which, if he list he may speak, I admit to my presence ; whom, I assure you, I find even such as fits the judgment of your place, to esteem with no temporary honour. You may believe my judgment, that have had no cause to give him a partial censure. I perceive that God bestowed His gifts on him with no sparing hand ; but even with his dole was amply enlarged.¹ But, above all, I command his faith to you ; for whom, I see, he neglects and loseth his greatest hopes ere now, and in all your requests rather overcarries it, as though nothing must be denied your request.

"And for that part of his charge, that toucheth my particular, though at your commandment he followeth your laws, yet found I my want such, as are far short from such an election as your choice should make you, where both youth and beauty should accompany each other ; of which, though either fail, yet let not such defects make diminution of my friendship's price, which I trust to make of so true a value, that no touchstone shall try any mixture in that compound, but such as fears not trial.

"To conclude : this bearer hath well satisfied my expectation, as one that ought to make some amends for former wrongs,—to [whom] I have bequeathed the trust to lay open unto you my griefs and injuries, which, through lewd advice, you have wrought ; though,

¹ So in the original ; but I cannot make out the sense.

I trust, coming amends may easily blot out of my memory's books. This I bequeath to the safe keeping of God ; who give some wisdom to sever a sincere advice from a fraudulent counsel, and bless you from betraying snares, who takes the feet oft of the hare !

"Your assured careful Sister
and Cousin,

"ELIZABETH R."²

No. XXV.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, June 1594, page 218.

The following letter of Elizabeth to James was sent immediately previous to the baptism of Prince Henry :—

"MY GOOD BROTHER,—You have so well repaired the hard lines of menacing speech, that I like much better the gloss than the text ; and do assure you that the last far graceth you better, and fitteth best our two amities. You may make sure account, that what counsel, advice, or mislike, my writing can make you, receiveth ever ground of what is best for you, though my interest be least in them. And, therefore, having so good foundation, I hope you will make your profit of my plainness ; and remember that others may have many ends in their advices, and I but you for principal of mine.

"I render you many thanks, for bond of firm and constant amity, with most assurance of never entering with my foes in treaty or good-will, until constraint of my behalf cause the breach. It pleaseth me well that this addition may assure me a perpetuity ; for never shall my act deserve so foul an imputation. But I muse what such an Horace his but should need to me,³ whose solid deeds have never merited such a halfed suspicion. Put out of your breast, therefore, my sincere heart intreats you, so unfit a thought for a royal mind ; and set in such place the unfeigned love that my deserts have craved, and make a great distance betwixt others not tried, and mine so long approved.

² This letter is not dated, and is therefore placed at the end of the correspondence ; but it appears to have been sent at the time when James was (as Elizabeth thought) acting with inconsistent lenity to Huntly and the Catholics, probably sometime in September 1593. See p. 206.

³ So in the original ; but the sense I can not make out.

"It gladdeth me much, that you now have falsified such bruits as fore-past deeds have bred you : for tongues of men are never bridled by kings' greatness, but by their goodness ; nor is it enough to say they will do well, when present acts gainsay their belief.

"We princes are set on highest stage, where looks of all beholders verdict our works ; neither can we easily dance in nets, so thick as may dim their sight. Such, therefore, our works should be, as may praise our Maker and grace ourselves : among the which I trust you will make one whose fac's shall tend to strengthen yourself, whoso you feeble, and count it best spent time to govern your own and not be tutored. And since no government lasts, where duly pain and grace be not inflicted where best they be deserved, I hope no depending humours of partial respects shall banish from you that right. And as you have, I may so justly say, almost alone, stood princely to your own estate, without prizing others' lewdness, that scarcely could afford a grant to a true request, or a yea to well-tried crimes, so I beseech you comfort yourself with this laud, that so much the more shineth your clearness through the foil of dim clouds, as their spot will hardly be blotted out, when your glory remains. And by this dealing, you shall ever so bind me to be your faithful watch, and stanch sister, that nothing shall I hope pass my knowledge, that any way may touch you, but I will both warn and ward in such sort, as your surety shall be respected, and your state held up, as God, that best is witness, knoweth ; whom ever I implore to counsel you the best, and preserve your days.

"Your affectionate Sister and Cousin,

E. R.

"Such remembrance of my affection as I send, take in good part, as being, such my affairs as now they be, more than millions sent from a richer prince, and fraughted with fewer foes ; which I doubt not but in wisdom you can consider, and as, in some part, I have at length dilated to this gent."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office.
Endorsed, June 1594, M. of her
Ma^ts L^re wth her owne hand to the
K. of Scotts.

No. XXVI., page 245.

KINMONT WILLIE.

Lord Scrope, on the morning after the enterprise, wrote both to the privy-council of England and to Lord Burghley, entreating them to move the queen to insist on the instant delivery of Bucleuch, to be punished for this proud attempt, as he deserved. In his letter to the privy-council, he thus describes the enterprise : —

"Yesternight, in the dead time thereof, Walter Scott of Hardinge,² and Walter Scott of Goldylands, the chief men about Buclughe, accompanied with 500 horsemen of Buclughe and Kinmont's friends, did come, armed and appointed with gavlocks and crows of iron, hand-picks, axes, and scaling-ladders, unto an outward corner of the base court of this castle, and to the postern-door of the same ; which they undermined speedily and quickly, and made themselves possessors of the base court ; brake into the chamber where Will of Kinmont was ; carried him away ; and in their discovery by the watch, left for dead two of the watchmen ; hurt a servant of mine, one of Kinmont's keepers ; and were issued again out of the postern, before they were descried by the watch of the inner ward, and ere resistance could be made.

"The watch, as it should seem, by reason of the stormy night, were either on sleep, or gotten under some covert to defend themselves from the violence of the weather, by means whereof the Scots achieved their enterprise with less difficulty. . . . If Buclughe himself have been thereat in person, the captain of this proud attempt, as some of my servants tell me they heard his name called upon, (the truth whereof I shall shortly advertise,) then I humbly beseech, that her majesty may be pleased to send unto the king, to call for, and effectually to press his delivery, that he may receive punishment as her majesty shall find that the quality of his offence shall demerit ; for it will be a dangerous example to leave this high attempt unpunished. Assuring your lordships, that

¹ State-paper Office, Border Correspondence, Lord Scrope to the Council, April 13, 1596.

² Walter Scott of Harden, who, under Bucleuch himself, seems to have been the principal leader in this daring and successful enterprise, was the direct ancestor of the present Lord Polwarth.

if her majesty will give me leave, it shall cost me both life and living, rather than such an indignity to her highness, and contempt to myself, shall be tolerated. In revenge whereof, I intend that something shall be shortly enterprise against the principals in this action, for repair thereof, if I be not countermanded by her majesty."

"These names were taken by the informer at the mouth of one that was in person at the enforcing of this castle, the 13th April 1596 :—

The Laird of Buclughe.

Walter Scot of Goldielands.

Walter Scot of Hardinge.

Walter Scot of Branxholme.

— Scot named Todrigge.

Will. Elliott, Goodman of Gorrombye.

John Elliott, called of the Copshawe.

The Laird of Mangerton.

The young Laird of Whithaugh, and his sonne.

Three of the Calfhills, Jocke, Bighams, and one Ally, a bastard.

Sandy Armstronge, sonne to Hebbye.

Kinmont's Jocke, Francie, Geordy, and Sandy, all brethren, the sonnes of Kinmont.

Willie Bell, redcloake, and two of his brethren.

Walter Bell of Godesby.

Three brethren of Twada Armstrong's. Young John of the Hollace, and one of his brethren.

Christy of Barneglish, and Roby of the Langholm.

The Chingles?

Willie Kange, and his brethren, with their complices.

"The informer saith, that Buclughe was the fifth man which entered the castle; and encouraged his company with these words—'Stand to it; for I have vowed to God and my prince, that I would fetch out of England, Kinmont, dead or quick; and will maintain that action when it is done, with fire and sword.'

The date on the back, April 13, is in the handwriting of Lord Burghley.¹

No. XXVII.

The following spirited and indignant letter of Elizabeth to James, was written soon after the release of Kinmont Will by Buccleuch :—

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, April 1596,
page 245.²

"I am to speak with what argument my letters should be fraught, since such themes be given me, as I am loath to find, and am slow to recite. Yet, since I needs must treat of [them] and unwillingly receive, I cannot pretermit to set afore you a too rare example of a seduced king by evil information.

"Was it ever seen, that a prince from his cradle, preserved from the slaughter, held up in royal dignity, conserved from many treasons, maintained in all sorts of kindness, should remunerate, with so hard measure, such dear deserts, with doubt to yield in just treaties response to a lawful friend's demand? Ought it to be put to a question, whether a king should do another his like, the right? Or should a council be demanded *their* good pleasure what *he himself* should do? Were it in the non-age of a prince, it might have some colour; but in a Father-age, it seemeth strange, and, I daresay, without example. I am sorry for the cause that constrains this speech, especially in so apert a matter, whose root grows far, and is of that nature that it (I fear, me) will more harm the wronger than the wronged; for how like regard soever be held of me, yet I should grieve too much to see you neglect yourself, whose honour is touched in such degree, as that our English, whose regard, I doubt not, you have in some esteem, for other good thoughts of you, will measure your love by your deeds, not your words in your paper.

"Wherefore, for fine, let this suffice you, that I am as evil treated by my named friend as I could be by my known foe. Shall any castle or habytacle of mine be assailed by a night larcin, and shall not my confederate send the offender to his due punishment? Shall a friend stick at that demand that he ought rather to prevent? The law of kingly love would have said, nay: and not for persuasion of such as never can or will stead you, but dis honour you to keep their own rule, lay behind you such due regard of me, and in it of yourself, who, as long as you use this trade, will be thought not of yourself ought, but of conventions what they will. For, commissioners I will never grant, for an act that he cannot

¹ MS., State-paper Office, April 13, 1596. Border Correspondence.

² MS. Royal Letters, Scotland. State-paper Office.

deny that made; for what so the cause be made, no cause should have done that. And when you with a better-weighed judgment shall consider, I am assured my answer shall be more honourable and just; which I expect with more speed, as well for you as for myself.

"For other doubtful and litigious causes in our Border, I will be ready to point commissioners, if I shall find you needful; but for this matter of so villainous a usage, assure you I will never be so answered, as hearers shall need. In this and many other matters, I require your trust to our ambassador, which faithfully will return them to me. Praying God for your safe keeping.

"Your faithful and loving Sister,
"E. R."

Endorsed, Copie of her Maj. Letter to the King of Scots, of her own hand.

No. XXVIII., page 245.

After Kinmont Will's Rescue and Deliverance by Buccleuch, 1596.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—That I see a king more considerate of what becometh him in the behalf of his like, than counsellors, that never being of such like estate, can hardlier judge what were fittest done, I marvel no more than I am glad to find yourself as greatest, so worthier of judgment, than such as, if they were as they ought, you need not have had the glory of so honourable a fact alone. But you have made me see that you can prize what were meetest, and deem how short of that they shewed, who have displayed their neglect, in leaving you destitute of good advice, by their backwardness in that was their duty. And I hope it will make you look with a broad sight on such advisers, and will warn you by this example not to concur with such deceitful counsel, but will cause you either to mind their custom, or to get you such as be better minded, than to hazard you the loss of your most affectionate, in following their unseemly advice.

"For the punishment given to the offender, I render you many thanks; though I must confess, that without he be rendered to ourself, or to our warden, we have not that we ought. And, therefore, I beseech you consider

the greatness of my dishonour, and measure his just delivery accordingly. Deal in this case like a king, that will have all this realm and others adjoining see how justly and kindly you both will, and can use a prince of my quality; and let not any dare persuade more for him than you shall think fit, whom it becomes to be echoes to your actions, no judges of what beseems you.

"For Border matters, they are so shameful and inhuman as it would loathe a king's heart to think of them. I have borne for your quiet, too long, even murders committed by the hands of your own wardens; which, if they be true, as I fear they be, I hope they shall well pay for such demerits, and you will never endure such barbarous acts to be unrevenged.

"I will not molest you with other particularities; but will assure myself that you will not easily be persuaded to overslip such enormities, and will give both favourable ear to our ambassador, and speedy redress, with due correction for such demeanour. Never think them meet to rule, that guides without rule.

"Of me make this account, that in your world shall never be found a more sincere affection, nor purer from guile, nor fuller fraught with truer sincerity, than mine; which will not harbour in my breast a wicked conceit of you, without such great cause were given, as you yourself could hardly deny; of which we may speed, I hope, *ad calendas Graecas*.

"I render millions of thanks for such advertisements as this bearer brought from you; and see by that, you both weigh me and yourself in a right balance: for who seeks to supplant one, looks next for the other. This paper I end with my prayers for your safety, as desireth

"Your most affectionate Sister,
"ELIZ. R."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office.
Endorsed, Copie of her Mat^s Lre to the K. of Scots, of his own hand, for Mr Bowes.

No. XXIX., page 265.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, July 1, 1598.

On the Subject of Valentine Thomas.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Suppose not that my silence hath had any other root than hating to make an argument of my writing to you, that should mo-

lest you, or trouble me ; being most desirous that no mention might once be made of so villainous an act, specially that might but in word touch a sacred person ; but now I see that so lavishly it hath been used by the author thereof, that I can refrain no longer to make you partaker thereof sincerely, from the beginning to this hour, of all that hath proceeded ; and for more speed have sent charge with Bowes, to utter all, without fraud or guile, assuring you that few things have displeased me more since our first amities ; and charge you in God's name to believe, that I am not of so viperous a nature, to suppose or have thereof a thought against you, but shall make the deviser have his desert, more for that than ought else ; referring myself to the true trust of this gent, to whom I beseech you give full affiance in all he shall assure you on my behalf. And so God I beseech to prosper you with all His graces, as doth desire,

“ Your most affectionate Sister,
“ E. R.”

Royal Letters, State-paper Office.
Endorsed, 1598. Pr^{mo}. July,
Coppie of her Ma^t. Lre to the
Kinge of Scots, wt her owne
hande, concerninge Val. Thomas.

No. XXX., page 302.

The following letter was sent by the Earl of Mar, and the Abbot of Kinloss :

JAMES TO ELIZABETH, February 10,
1601.

“ MADAM AND DEAREST SISTER,—As the strait bonds of our so-long-continued amity do oblige me, so your daily example used towards me, in the like case, does invite me, not to suffer any misconstrued thoughts against any of your actions to take harbour in my heart ; but by laying open all my griefs before you, to seek from yourself the right remedy and cure for the same.

“ And since that I have oft found by experience, that evil-affected or unfit instruments employed betwixt us, have oftentimes been the cause of great misunderstanding amongst us, I have, therefore, at this time, made choice of sending unto you this nobleman, the Earl of Mar, in respect of his known honesty and constant affection to the continuance of our amity ; together with his colleague the Abbot of Kin-

loss, (a gentleman whose uprightness and honesty is well known unto you;) that by the labours of such honest and well-affected ministers, all scruples or griefs may on either side be removed, and our constant amity more and more be confirmed and made sound.

“ Assuring myself, that my ever honest behaviour towards you shall at least procure that justice at your hands, to try or¹ ye trust any unjust imputations spread of me, and not to wrong yourself in wronging your best friend ; but in repect of the faithfulness of the bearers, I will remit all particulars to their relation ; who, as they are directed to deal with you in all honest plainness, (the undiscoverable companion of true friendship,) so do I heartily pray you to hear and trust them in all things as it were myself, and to give them a favourable ear and answer, as shall ever be deserved at your hands by

“ Your most loving and affectionate
Brother and Cousin,

“ JAMES R.”²

“ From Holyrood House, the
10th February 1601.”

No. XXXI., page 302.

The following letter from the English queen, is an answer to the former letter of James to Elizabeth, sent by his ambassadors, the Earl of Mar and the Abbot of Kinloss.—See this volume, p. 302.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, May 1601.

“ MY GOOD BROTHER,—At the first reading of your letter, albeit I wondered much what springs your griefs might have of many of my actions, who knows myself most clear of any just cause to breed you any annoy ; yet I was well lightened of my marvel when you dealt so kindly with me not to let them harbour in your breast, but were content to send me so well a chosen couple,³ that might utter and receive what you mean, and what I should relate.

“ And when my greedy will to know, did stir me at first access to require an ease, with speed, of such matters, I found by them that the principal causes,

¹ Or ; ere.

² Wholly in James's hand. Royal Letters, State-paper Office, sealed with the king's signet ring.

³ The Earl of Mar and the Abbot of Kinloss.

were the selfsame in part, that the Lord of Kinloss had, two years past and more, imparted to me : to whom and to other your ministers I am sure I have given so good satisfaction in honour and reason, as, if your other greater matters have not made them forgotten, you yourself will not deny them.

“ But not willing in my letter to molest you with that which they will not fail but tell you, (as I hope,) together with such true and guileless profession of my sincere affection to you, as you shall never have just reason to doubt my clearness in your behalf ; yet this I must tell you—that as I marvel much to have such a subject that would impart so great a cause to you, afore ever making me privy thereof, so doth my affectionate amity to you claim at your hands that my ignorance of subjects’ boldness be not augmented by your silence ; by whom you may be sure you shall never obtain so much good, as my good dealing can afford you.

“ Let not shades deceive you, which may take away best substance from you, when they can turn but to dust or smoke. An upright demeanour bears ever more poise than all disguised shows of good can do. Remember that a bird of the air, if no other instrument, to an honest king, shall stand in stead of many feigned practices, to utter aught may anywise touch him. And so leaving my scribbles, with my best wishes that you scan what works becometh best a king, and what in end will best avail him.

“ Your most loving Sister, that longs to see you deal as kindly as I mean,

“ ELIZABETH R.”

Royal Letters, State-paper Office.
Endorsed, Copie of her Mat^r
Letter to the King of Scots,
written with her own hand.

No. XXXII., page 306.

The following letter was entirely written in the queen’s own hand, and sent to the king by the Duke of Lennox :

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, December 2,
1601.

“ MY DEAR BROTHER,—Never was there yet Prince nor meaner wight, to whose grateful turns I did not correspond, in keeping them in memory, to their avail and my own honour ; so trust I, that you will not doubt but that your last letters by Fowles and the

duke are so acceptably taken, as my thanks can not be lacking for the same, but yields them you in thankful sort. And albeit I suppose I shall not need to trouble any of your subjects in my service, yet, according to your request, I shall use the liberty of your noble offer, if it shall be requisite.

“ And whereas your faithful and dear duke hath at large discoursed with me, as of his own knowledge, what faithful affection you bear me, and hath added the leave he hath received from you, to proffer himself for the performer of my service in Ireland, with any such as best may please me under his charge, I think myself greatly indebted to you for your so tender care of my prosperity ; and have told him that I would be loath to venture his person in so perilous service, since I see he is such one that you make so great a reckoning of ; but that some of meaner quality, of whom there were less loss, might in that case be ventured.

“ And sure, dear brother, in my judgment, for the short acquaintance that I have had with him, you do not prize with better cause any near unto you : for I protest, without feigning or doubling, I never gave ears to greater laud, than such as I have heard him pronounce of you, with humble desire that I would banish from my mind any evil opinion or doubt of your sincerity to me. And because though I know it was but duty, yet where such show appears in mindful place, I hold it worthy regard ; and am not so wicked to conceal it from you, that you may thank yourself for such a choice. And thus much shall suffice for fear to molest your eyes with my scribbling : committing you to the enjoying of best thoughts, and good consideration of your careful friend, which I suppose to be,

“ Yo^r most aff. Sister,
“ ELIZABETH R.”

Royal Letters, State-paper Office.
Endorsed, 2d December 1601. Cop.
of her Mat^r Lre to the King of
Scot: by the Duke of Lennox.

No. XXXIII. page 311.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, July 4, 1602.

“ MY GOOD BROTHER,—Who longest draws the thread of life, and views the strange accidents that time makes, doth not find out a rarer gift than thankfulness is, that is most precious and sel-

domest found; which makes me well gladded, that you methinks begin to feel how necessary a treasure this is, to be employed where best it is deserved; as may appear in those lines that your last letters express, in which your thanks be great for the sundry cares that of your state and honour my dear friendship hath afforded you; being ever ready to give you ever such subjects for your writing, and think myself happy when either my warnings or counsel may in fittest time avail you.

"Whereas it hath pleased you to impart the offer that the French king hath made you, with a desire of secrecy: believe, that request includes a trust that never shall deceive: for though many exceed me in many things, yet I dare profess that I can ever keep taciturnity for myself and my friends. *My head may fail, but my tongue shall never;* as I will not say but yourself can in yourself, though not to me witness. But of that no more: *preterierunt illi dies.*

"Now to the French: in plain dealing, without fraud or guile, if he will do as he pretends, you shall be more beholden to him than he is to himself, who within one year hath winked at such injuries and affronts, as, ere I would have endured, that am of the weakest sex, I should condemn *my* judgment: I will not enter into *his*. And, therefore, if his *verba* come *ad actionem*, I more shall wonder than do suspect; but if you will needs have my single advice, try him if he continue in that mind. And as I know that you would none of such a League, as myself should not be one, so do I see, by his overture, than himself doth: or if, for *my* assistance, you should have need of

all help, he would give it: so, as since he hath so good consideration of me, you will allow him therein, and doubt nothing but that he will have me willingly for company; for as I may not forget how their league with Scotland was reciproke when we had wars with them, so is it good reason that our friendships should be mutual.

"Now, to confess my kind taking of all your loving offers, and vows of most assured oaths, that naught shall be concealed from me, that either prince or subject shall, to your knowledge, work against me or my estate—surely, dear brother, you right me much if so you do. And this I vow, that without you list, I will not willingly call you in question for such warnings, if the greatness of the cause may not compel me thereunto. And do intreat you to think that if any accident so befall you, as either secrecy or speed shall be necessary, suppose yourself to be sure of such a one as shall neglect neither, to perform so good a work. Let others promise, and I will do as much with truth as others with wiles. And thus I leave to molest your eyes with my scribbling; with my perpetual prayers for your good estate, as desireth your most

"Loving and affectionate Sister,
"ELIZABETH R."

"As for your good considerations of Border causes, I answer them by my agent, and infinitely thank you therefor."

Royal Letters, State-paper Office.
Endorsed, 4th July 1602. Copie
of her Maties Lre to the King of
Scotts, sent by Mr Roger Ashton.

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Margaret Erskine was Moray's mother & was James V's mistress - She was daughter of Lord Erskine - She married Robt. Douglas of the Isle, who was master of Loch Leven

Mary's regency
Earl of Arran nearest heir to throne
Mary of Guise half bro of Mary
Earl of Moray murdered at Linlithgow (shot)
Lennox was shot by Capt Calderwood
John Star
Morton

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